

City of Los Banos General Plan

May 19, 1999

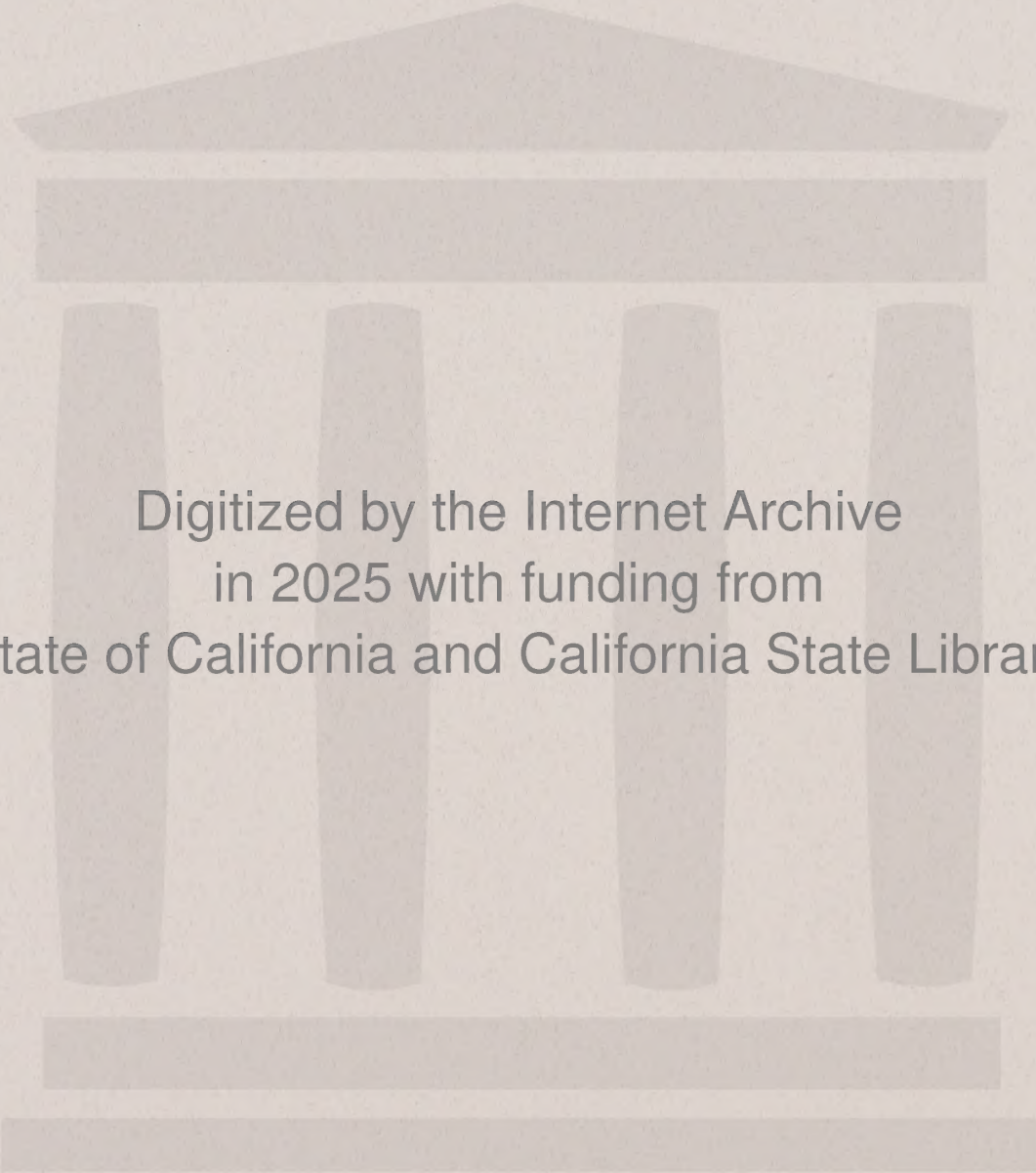


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City of Los Banos

General Plan

May 19, 1999

Prepared for:

City of Los Banos

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Los Banos General Plan

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PREFACE AND ASSUMPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The City of Los Banos is located in the western portion of Merced County. Los Banos is the largest City on the westside serving the communities of Dos Palos, Gustine, Volta, Santa Nella, and the surrounding unincorporated territory. The City of Los Banos has a population of approximately 21,385 in 1998 according to the State Department of Finance. Figure PA-1 shows the regional location of Los Banos.

The existing City is comprised of approximately 5,464 acres or about 8.5 square miles. The Urban Limits considered for the City of Los Banos General Plan Update is approximately 11,089 acres or about 17 square miles. The Urban Limits included in the General Plan are generally about one-quarter mile south of Henry Miller Road to the north, one-eighth mile south of Pioneer Road to the south, one-half mile west of Los Banos Creek to the west, the Santa Fe Grade (Arroyo Canal) north of Highway 152, and the San Luis Canal south of Highway 152 forms the eastern boundary.

GENERAL GROWTH ASSUMPTIONS

This General Plan is based on growth assumptions that reflect the City's historic patterns. Since 1980, annual growth rates have ranged from under two percent to over eight percent. Taken as an average, however the City has grown at about five (5%) percent according to State figures. Other planning figures prepared by regional planning agencies forecast growth at a rate of about 3.67%. For the purposes of the General Plan, the annual high and low figures were used for the upper and lower growth projections, and a sustainable scenario at 4 percent was assumed for this General Plan based on past growth statistics, expectations of growth by the State and regional planning agencies, building permit activity, need for/and limitation of public improvements, and typical growth rates of similar central valley communities.

There is sufficient area within the *Urban Limit Line* as defined in the **Land Use Element**, to accommodate growth planned by the City. The City intends to pursue annexation to the Urban Limit Line when Area Plans have been approved and the City is confident that infrastructure will be available at the time of development according to an adopted phasing program. It is the intent of the City to only go forward toward annexation of land based on sound planning and implementable infrastructure development.

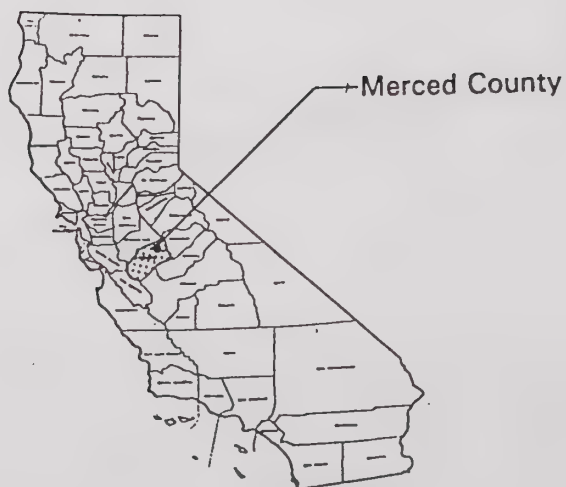
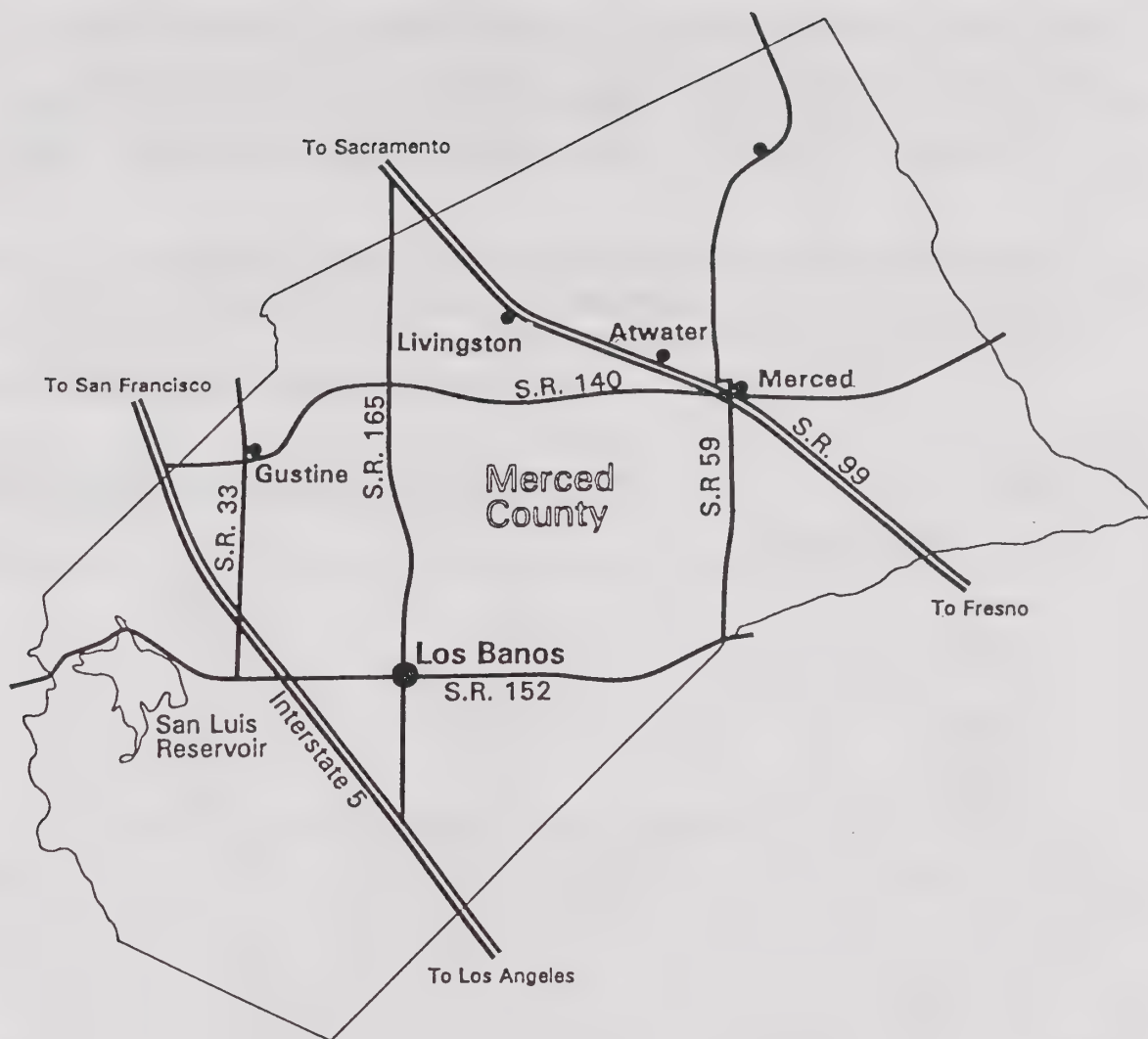


Figure PA-1: Regional Location

Overall, the General Plan is designed to accommodate the population figures shown in Table PA-1. The figures are not fixed "goals" or "limits" to population, only estimates that the City feels are achievable and within its ability to accommodate. An explanation of land need to meet the population projection shown in Table PA-1 is located in Appendix A.

Figure PA-2 represents three different population growth figures reviewed for the General Plan. The "calculated" line (at 4%) on the graph represents a combination of the historical growth rates and projections by various agencies, as well as, current residential building permit issuance by the City.

Population Growth Estimates 1997 - 2020 at 4%		Table PA-1
Year	Population	
1997	20,694	
2000	23,278	
2005	28,321	
2010	34,457	
2015	41,992	
2020	51,005	

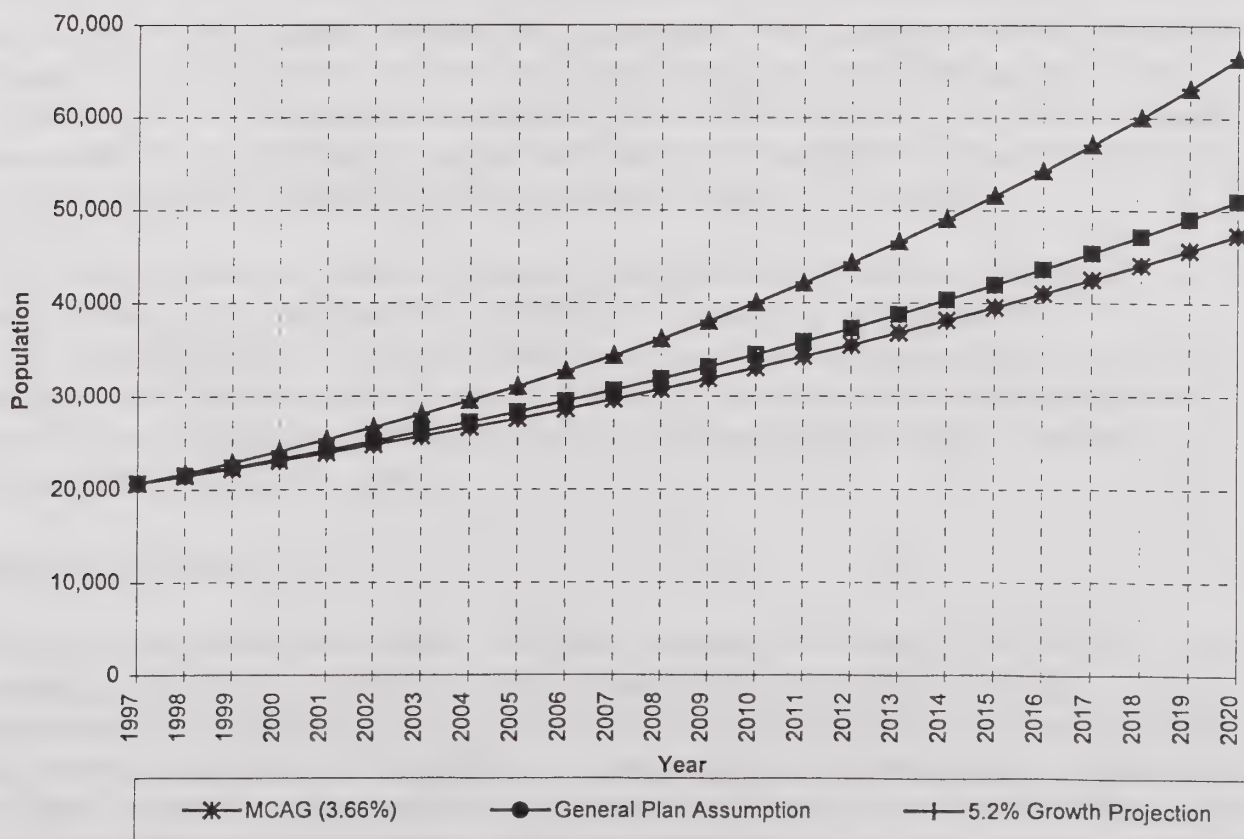


Figure PA-2: City of Los Banos Population Projections

PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY- AREA OF INTEREST

The *Area of Interest*, depicted in Figure PA-3, extends well beyond the potential land needs of the City over the next twenty years. The size of the *Area of Interest* is recognition that factors beyond the City's control affect policies of the City. Within the *Area of Interest Boundary* line, more focused development-oriented boundaries have been established (*Urban Limit Line*). Goals and Policies associated with the *Area of Interest* emphasize cooperation with federal, state and local agencies to ensure that impact on the City of Los Banos is minimized. The General Plan Study Area Boundary has been reduced to coincide with the Area of Interest Boundary. The Area of Interest Boundary has been reduced from the initial Area of Interest established by the General Plan Advisory Committee by about 7,210 acres. Between the Urban Limit Line (SUDP) and the Area of Interest boundary the City desires to maintain the intent of the Tax Sharing Agreement with Merced County where both parties will not rezone without the concurrence of the other party.

To ensure that the area of the General Plan was accommodating to growth, but not necessarily encouraging of new growth, several assumptions of future land use have been made. The major assumptions are indicated below, along with an explanation of why they are important to the General Plan.

The *Urban Limit Line* contains more land than the City is projected to need over the next 25 years. The Update General Plan Committee discussed the relative importance of planning for 25 years as opposed to concentrating on immediate concerns. The consensus of the Committee was that the General Plan Goals and Objectives should concentrate on issues likely to be resolved over a 25 year period, while the policies and programs should be designed for implementation within 5 - 10 years.

All of the land within the *Area of Interest* is assigned a land use designation on the General Plan Land Use Map. Much of the area is designated agriculture or environmental reserve, and would remain in those land uses beyond the term of this General Plan. Goals and policies that affect land use within this boundary focus on reasonable development patterns and buffers between agricultural environmental reserves and urban land uses.

URBAN LIMIT LINE

To help guide development within the *Area of Interest*, an *Urban Limit Line* (ULL) was developed. The *Urban Limit Line*, in most areas, is the future extent of urban development and services. The ULL in the General Plan has been reduced from the ULL recommended by the Committee. The adopted ULL has been pulled in on the east and west, as well as expanded to the north and south for a net increase of slightly over 600 acres from the existing Sphere of Influence/SUDP.

The *Urban Limit Line* is proposed to be recognized as the City's Sphere of Influence. A "sphere of influence" is defined in State law as the projected limits to which a city could

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extend municipal services. The Urban Limit Line is also analogous to the Merced County General Plan designation of the Specific Urban Development Plan (SUDP) boundary. Figure PA-3 depicts the change in the SUDP/Sphere of Influence Boundary that is included in this General Plan. As a matter of course and in keeping with the cooperative intergovernmental policies of the General Plan.

Beyond the *Urban Limit Line*, the City foresees urban transitioning to rural/agricultural uses, or where environmental constraints warrant protection from urban encroachment within the Urban Limit Line. A prime example of land within the Urban Limit Line that is not intended for urban development is agricultural designated land between the San Luis Canal and the Santa Fe Grade (Arroyo Canal) north of Highway 152. This land is included in the Urban Limit boundary as it lies between urban development west of the San Luis Canal and the City's wastewater treatment facility east of the Santa Fe Grade (Arroyo Canal). While the City does not intend to extend municipal utilities to this area that would allow urban growth, the City will provide this area with police and fire services which are considered urban services consistent with the Sphere of Influence definition. It is logical to include this area within the Urban Limit Line so as not to create a peninsula of land between two important elements of the City's urban area. It is expected that the City will develop most of the territory within the *Urban Limit Line* at some point in the future, and that future may extend beyond this General Plan timeframe (2020). Consequently, Goals and Policies within this boundary emphasize specific development patterns and expectations.

MASTER PLAN AREAS

Certain areas within the Urban Limit Line will require specific studies, Area Plans or development agreements including environmental and infrastructure analysis before the City will consider them for annexation and development. Issues in these areas include concerns with the compatibility with the environment, continued agricultural use until time of development, timing of growth, the need to plan for and/or implement regional sewer, water and drainage improvements, and addressing traffic impacts. The criteria for Master Plans, Area Plans or Development Agreement is outlined in the Land Use Element.

CITY LIMIT LINE

Land within the City Limits is under direct City jurisdiction. Incorporation into the City implies the ability or willingness to provide services for the projected development. As indicated in Master Plan Areas, annexed territory will generally be subject to Master Plans or Development Agreements that limit development depending on the availability of urban services or the timing of growth.

PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Los Banos is an agricultural community. Nearly all of the industry within the City is directly or indirectly linked with local agriculture. The City is also located in the vicinity of

some of California's most important wetlands. The General Plan recognizes the importance of these resources, and establishes several significant Policies and Programs that protect the right to farm, and the biotic diversity of wetlands.

RE-ALIGNMENT OF HIGHWAY 152

The most significant influence on future land use patterns in Los Banos will be the ultimate realignment of Highway 152. This project is identified in the Merced County Regional Transportation Plan and is scheduled over the next 20 years, depending on available funding. The alignment has not been selected at the time this General Plan Update is being considered. The City has opted to show both a "northern" and "southern" corridor on the Land Use Plan. The City does not intend to delay the adoption of the General Plan Update pending the outcome of the selection of the preferred route. The corridors are general in location and the assumption is that the selected alignment may be placed anywhere in the corridor. Underlaying the placement of the corridors on the Land Use Map is a policy not to allow urban development within the corridors that would increase the cost or complexity of right-of-way acquisition. Urban development is defined as any substantial structure, building, or dwelling. The City does not intend to devote substantial time and resources to considering alternatives in this General Plan Update or evaluating the environmental impacts of either alternative By-pass location. The City believes that substantial future effort will be required to define and analyze such By-pass route alternatives and that the City's General Plan can be amended at a later date to reflect the final selection of the By-pass route incorporating and relying on the information and analysis generated during the route selection process.

Merced County is expected to participate in the planning of the By-pass corridor and likewise not allow urban development in the corridors until such time as a preferred alternative has been selected.

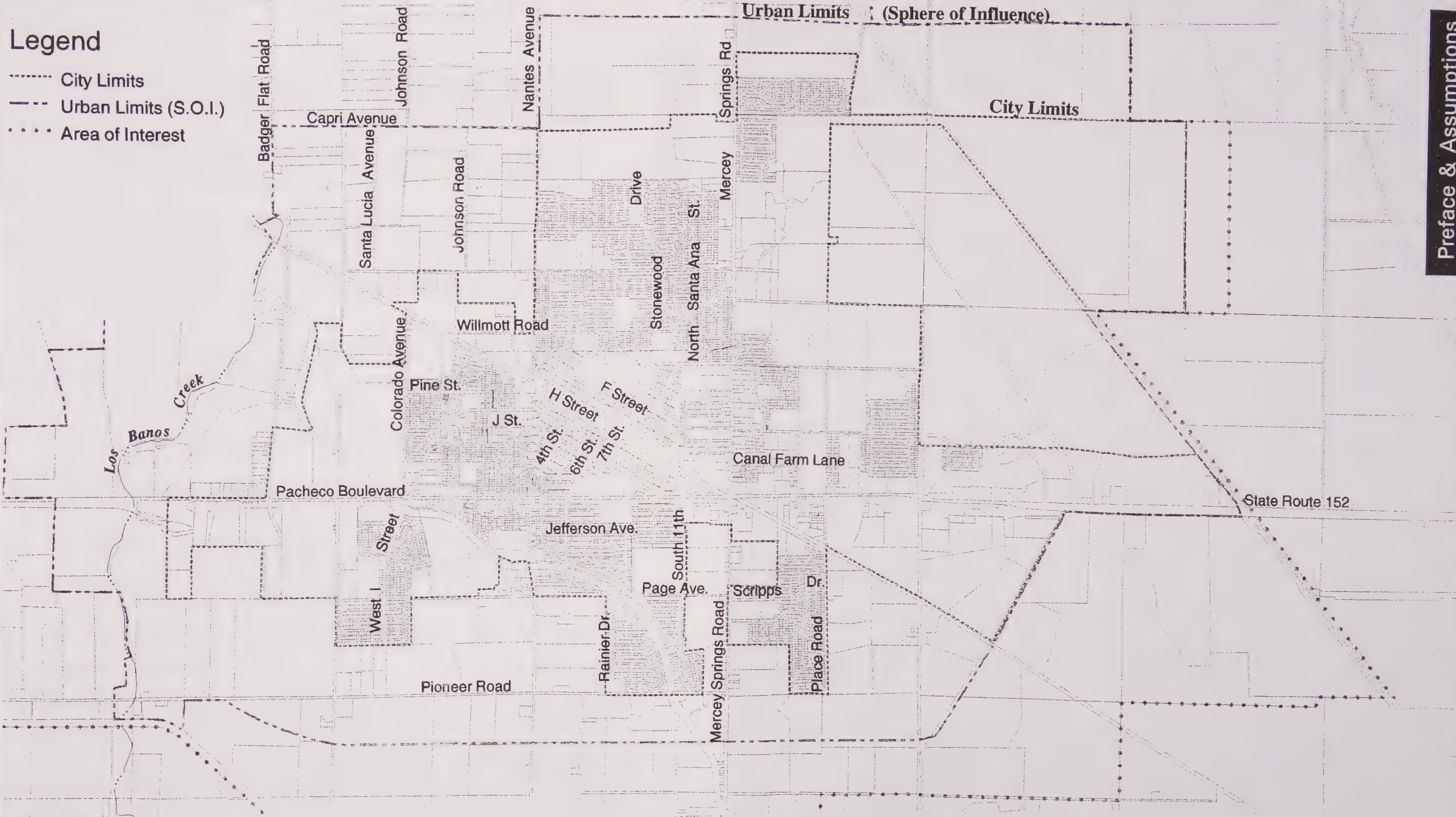
DIRECTION OF GROWTH

The General Plan does not mandate growth in specific areas within the *Urban Limit Line*. Instead, growth is guided to areas that either have existing infrastructure, or where public services can be easily provided. The Plan does, however, direct growth away from existing land uses that are considered incompatible with urban uses:

- ☐ Growth is discouraged any farther north than approximately ½ mile south of Henry Miller Avenue. This policy recognizes the importance of this agricultural land, the need to keep growth centralized around Los Banos, and helps protect sensitive biotic areas north of Henry Miller Avenue. This policy is also designed to help protect the ultimate right-of-way of the Highway 152 bypass if the northern route is selected.

Legend

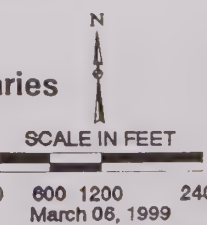
- City Limits
- - - - Urban Limits (S.O.I.)
- Area of Interest



Preface & Assumptions



Figure PA-3: Planning Area Boundaries



- Growth south of Pacheco Boulevard (Highway 152) is discouraged any farther than ¼ mile south of Pioneer Road. Growth up to this point needs to be planned as phased over time with an emphasis on quality and infrastructure sufficiency.

Pioneer Road is designated as an arterial, with development both north and south of the right-of-way. The intent of the plan is to discourage urban encroachment on the larger agricultural parcels to the south of Pioneer Road.

- Growth to the west is encouraged up to Los Banos Creek. This takes advantage of existing frontage on Pacheco Boulevard, the airport, and open space opportunities adjacent to the creek. Growth may eventually occur on the western side of the Creek and/or along Highway 152, but should only occur in connection with planned developments that incorporate Los Banos Creek as a protected amenity to such development.

- Intensive growth to the east of the San Luis Canal is generally discouraged. This policy recognizes the existence of valuable wetland areas and endangered species habitat that may be present east of the Santa Fe Grade. The Plan Provides for the area between the existing City Limits and the San Luis Canal to be included in a comprehensive Area Plan. The Merced College campus must be integrated into the planning in this area not only from a land use perspective, but from circulation and access, as well as, other infrastructure systems.

Only a limited size Master Planned area on the north side of Highway 152 between the San Luis Canal and Santa Fe Grade Canal to accommodate industrial land uses needing access to the State Highway is envisioned. A key component to these uses will be buffers and low intensity uses approaching the Santa Fe Grade Canal. Land uses east of the San Luis Canal and approaching the Santa Fe Grade Canal should plan for the possible impacts on neighboring wildlife habitats including buffers and setbacks.

Figure PA-4 shows opportunities and constraints for growth in the Area of Interest.

COMBINED LAND USES

This General Plan places more emphasis on the Zoning Ordinance for the placement of commercial uses. With the exception of the Downtown District, the Plan contains only two Commercial Designations (Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial), and establishes criteria for different zoning districts. Industrial uses remain unchanged, with both Light Industrial and regular Industrial Designations. A combined Office Industrial Designation allows for professional offices that may need storage, or small fabrication areas.

City of Los Banos

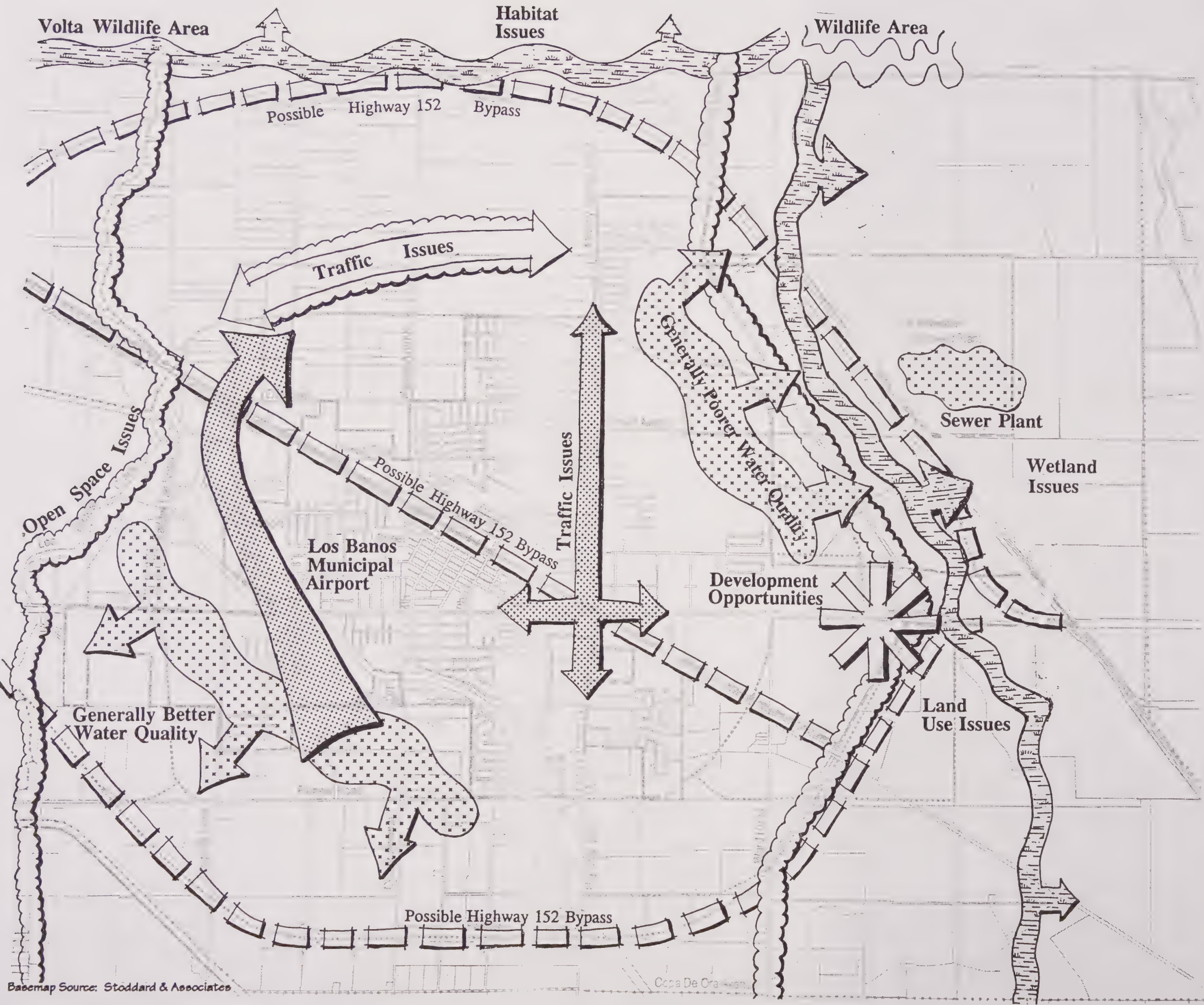
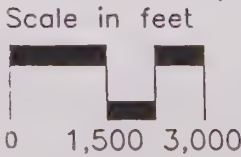


Figure PA-4: Opportunities and Constraints



Basemap Source: Stoddard & Associates

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ORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

Many more ideas than summarized above were discussed over the course of the update, and most were incorporated into the Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Programs of this General Plan. The General Plan is intended to be a dynamic document, as well as, a reliable tool for day-to-day City operations. The Plan is not intended as a history of Los Banos, but rather a guideline for its future.

This document is divided into six distinct elements:

- LU Land Use
- CI Circulation
- OCR Open Space, Conservation & Recreation (*incorporating Open Space & Conservation*)
- HZ Hazards Management (*incorporating Safety, Noise & Air Quality*)
- PF Public Facilities and Services Element
- HSN Housing Element (previously adopted by the City)

Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs are numbered consecutively at the end of each element. The specific Objectives, Policies and Programs that address Air Quality are designated with an (AQ) suffix. A complete listing of policies directed toward protecting air quality is provided as an appendix to the General Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The environmental analysis will be to the Program Level as described in Section 15168 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. This type of Environmental Impact Report serves as the base document for future project level environmental review. The Program EIR is of sufficient detail to allow some activities of the City to occur without subsequent environmental review. The Program EIR does not preclude the environmental review of projects that are inconsistent with the General Plan, or vary from the assumptions used for the purposes of Plan review. The Program EIR identifies specific situations where additional environmental review will be necessary.

Mitigation measures designed to reduce the identified impact to a less than significant level are incorporated in the Policy and Program component of the General Plan. The Program EIR is available as a separate volume of the General Plan.

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LAND USE

INTRODUCTION

Goals, Policies, Objectives and Programs, together with the Land Use Diagram, provide a framework for the future development of Los Banos. The Land Use Element responds to issues, opportunities and constraints within the *Area of Interest* established for Los Banos. Major issues considered in this Element include:

- ☐ The location and timing of growth;
- ☐ Resisting the premature conversion of agricultural lands;
- ☐ Discouraging encroachment on existing agricultural uses;
- ☐ Helping to maintain the region's wetlands;
- ☐ Enhancement and preservation of the City Center;
- ☐ Balancing economic growth with urban growth; and
- ☐ Helping to maintain the "small town" atmosphere.
- ☐ Preservation of alternative corridors and continued planning for the selection of the Highway 152 By-pass route.

These issues are addressed within the overall context of recognizing existing and potential opportunities and constraints for Los Banos. The availability of public services and facilities, the existing pattern of land uses, availability of vacant land, and the natural environment all factor into the approval of new development.

LAND REQUIREMENTS

Raw land requirements are based on the population growth projections identified in the **Preface & Assumptions** chapter. It is clearly the intent of the City to plan for a sustainable population growth rate of 4% or less. While it is recognized that there may be occasional upward "spikes" in this growth rate, those anomalies are anticipated to be in response to special economic or housing demand conditions. The City intends to manage its growth by annexing sufficient land for development and requiring master plans, area plans, or development agreements that pace growth in these annexed areas and ensure that adequate infrastructure is available to accommodate that growth.

While discussion of the alternatives for the Highway 152 By-pass route continue, the corridors for future right-of-way need to be protected from intensive development including major structures and dwellings. Land within these corridors should remain in agricultural use until such time as the route for the By-pass is selected.

The primary land use assumption used in this element is that the existing "pattern" of land use will only change slightly over the next several years. As a result, Los Banos

will have approximately the same ratio of land uses at the end of the planning period as today. The figures in Table LU-1 indicate total land need by current land use type using a constant distribution ratio.

Land Need To Support Growth				Table LU-1
Year	Residential	Non-Residential	Market Factor	Total Land ¹
2000	184	41	112	337
2005	544	120	332	995
2010	981	216	598	1,795
2015	1,513	333	923	2,769
2020	2,161	475	1,318	3,954

¹ Total Land Needed Figures are Cumulative

Based on an average annual growth rate of approximately 4 %, the City will need to consider developing approximately 2,900 acres over the next 22 years. This amount of land combines residential and non-residential (2,636 acres) and public facilities (230 acres) which include schools, parks, water and wastewater utilities, and open space trails and amenities. The forecasted basic land need does not take into account vacancy rates or market availability factors. To keep land prices affordable, the City should maintain an inventory of vacant residential and non-residential land equal to about 50 percent of the forecasted basic land need for a total of almost 4,000 acres. As shown in Table LU-2, the City has approximately 43.5 percent of the total residential, commercial, and industrial land vacant. Table LU-3 represents the total area shown in Figure LU 1, by land use designation. Figure LU-1 is located in the pocket at the rear of the document. Also shown in this table is the amount of land already dedicated to urban uses.

Given the land uses shown in Figure LU-1 will be adequate to accommodate growth over the Planning Horizon, it is anticipated that the demand for different land uses will occur over the life of the General Plan and changes in land use patterns will be addressed during annual reviews of the General Plan.

Existing Land Use Distribution			Table LU-2
Land Use	Total Acres	Total Vacant	Actual Developed
Residential	2,855 ¹	1,080	1,775
Commercial	677	276	401
Industrial	762	510	252
Total	4,294 ²	1,866 ³	2,428

Notes:

Source: MCAG, 1998 and City of Los Banos Planning Department, 1998

¹ Includes all residential development

² 1,493 acres of Unclassified/Agriculture designated land is not included in the land use distribution.

³ 663 acres of vacant unclassified/Agriculture designated land is not included in the land use distribution.

Proposed Land Use Distribution

Table LU-3

Land Use Designation	Total Acres	Percent ¹	Total Developed	Percent ²	Remaining	Percent ³
Very Low Density Residential	893	8.05	0	0.00	893	13.71
Low Density Residential	4,271	38.52	1,309	37.59	2,692	45.47
Medium Density Residential	531	4.79	294	8.44	237	3.64
High Density Residential	130	1.17	94	2.70	36	0.55
Professional Office	66	0.60	50	1.44	16	0.25
Downtown Commercial	73	0.66	46	1.32	27	0.41
Commercial	623	5.62	391	11.23	232	3.56
Neighborhood Commercial	8	0.07	0	0.0	8	0.12
Office Industrial	197	1.78	0	0.00	197	3.02
Light Industrial	575	5.19	48	1.38	527	8.09
Industrial	756	6.82	238	6.84	518	7.95
Schools	245	2.21	127	3.65	118	1.81
Public Facilities	1,147	10.34	732	21.02	415	6.37
Open Space	386	3.48	153	4.39	233	3.58
Community College	95	.86	0	0.00	95	1.46
Total Urban Land Uses	9,996	100.00	3,482	100.00	6,514	100.00
Agriculture	1,093	9.86	1,093	100.00	0	0
Total	11,089					

Notes:

1. Percentage of the total acres designated for urban use.
2. Percentage of the total acres of developed land designated for urban use.
3. Percentage of the total acres of undeveloped land designated for urban use.

Source: MCAG calculation 1998

LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

To meet the requirements of State Law, and to simplify the planning process, all land within the Urban Limit Line of the General Plan is provided with a General Plan Land Use Designation. The designations are defined in this Element, and indicated on Figure LU-1, **City of Los Banos Land Use Map** (refer to pocket at end of document). The classifications of land are adopted as General Plan Policy and are intentionally broad to allow flexibility in project planning. This also allows more than one zoning district to be consistent within a given designation.

Residential Standards

The Land Use Element establishes standards of population density and building intensity for each Land Use classification. These figures are stated as "average" housing units per gross acre. Population density is obtained by applying average persons per households as defined from time to time by the State Department of Finance. Because these numbers are averages, they are stated in ranges to allow for a variety of development types to be consistent with the plan. Also, since the City can not regulate the number of persons per family, the ranges ensure that most municipal services can be appropriately planned.

Minimum Density Standards

Each element of the General Plan depends on the other for data when planning for the future. Assumptions made in the Land Use Element concerning units and intensity of development, are used in the Public Facilities Element to determine water and sewer need. Similar information is used to calculate potential traffic demand, park and open space needs, police and fire personnel staffing levels. In order for financing and improvement plans to function properly, it is important that a range of development be considered, and that development *actually occur* within the specified density and/or intensity range. To ensure this, the Land Use Element establishes a policy that sets a minimum density range for a given designation. Densities lower than the minimum designation may be permitted only under special circumstances. Criteria for consideration of the special circumstances is specifically established in the Zoning Ordinance, but generally include:

- ☐ Determination that the lower density will not cause shortfall in any assessment district, reimbursement agreement or other fee program implemented by the City;
- ☐ That design of the project addresses noise, traffic, and access within the confines of the project; and
- ☐ That adjacent land uses, existing or planned, are not significantly impaired, or prohibited, as a result of the lower density/intensity.

For the first few years, this policy will have little effect on development patterns. It is intended to protect the City from having to fund shortfalls in reimbursement or financing mechanisms over the long term. The policy also ensures that at least some of the

property designated for higher density uses is available for development near public services and not converted to low density uses simply as a result of a short-term market influence.

Typical & Maximum Density Standards

Each land use designation includes a "typical" and a "maximum" density and intensity. Usually the maximum is attainable only through special zoning, such as a Planned Development, or after completion of a Specific Plan. In some instances, redevelopment, in-fill or rehabilitation, the maximum density may be approached. Typical densities reflect the real-world application of the zoning ordinance to development. While 6,000 square feet may divide into a 43,560 square foot acre over seven times, the need for roadways, open space, and normal design parameters, usually limit this type of residential development to less than five units per acre.

Similar to the concerns over a minimum density, before the maximum density can be approved, the City will need to review existing infrastructure, traffic loads and the surrounding neighborhood. This process, replete with public hearings and notice, will allow for substantial input and discussion. Criteria for consideration of maximum density is specifically established in the Zoning Ordinance, but generally includes:

- ☐ Determination that the density will not cause a significant unfunded reduction in the level of service of any public service;
- ☐ That design of the project addresses noise, traffic, and access within the confines of the project;
- ☐ That adjacent land uses, existing or planned, are not significantly impaired, or prohibited, as a result of the increase in density/intensity; and
- ☐ That sufficient safeguards are built into the project to prevent a degradation of the project over time to where the project becomes a blight on the community.

Safeguards may include, but are not limited to:

- Larger numbers of apartments such that on-site management is required;
- Homeowners associations, assessment districts, or other similar responsible entities; or
- Design features intended to reduce maintenance and improve appearance.

Overall Design Standards

The City will prepare a set of subdivision and development design standards that describe minimum architectural and landscape requirements for development. Design concepts include varying front yard setbacks and height and bulk of buildings to create visual interest. Other ideas include using several design features such as open ended cul-de-sacs, pocket parks and entryways to help create a sense of neighborhood.

Pocket Parks

The Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element provides for the development of "pocket parks" in planned developments where maintenance of these facilities are guaranteed by a maintenance district. While the City discourages these type of parks on a citywide basis, these small play areas can be a valuable amenity to neighborhoods in planned developments when effectively integrated into the design of the project. Los Banos has a few of these parks in existing neighborhoods which see use by smaller children. Figure LU-2 shows how a number of design components, including open ended cul-de-sacs, and varied setbacks, can lead to a pocket park that helps form core of a neighborhood. The design also provides full visibility from public streets. Integrated with trails, canal banks and other pedestrian travelways, these facilities could form an integral part of quality development in Los Banos.

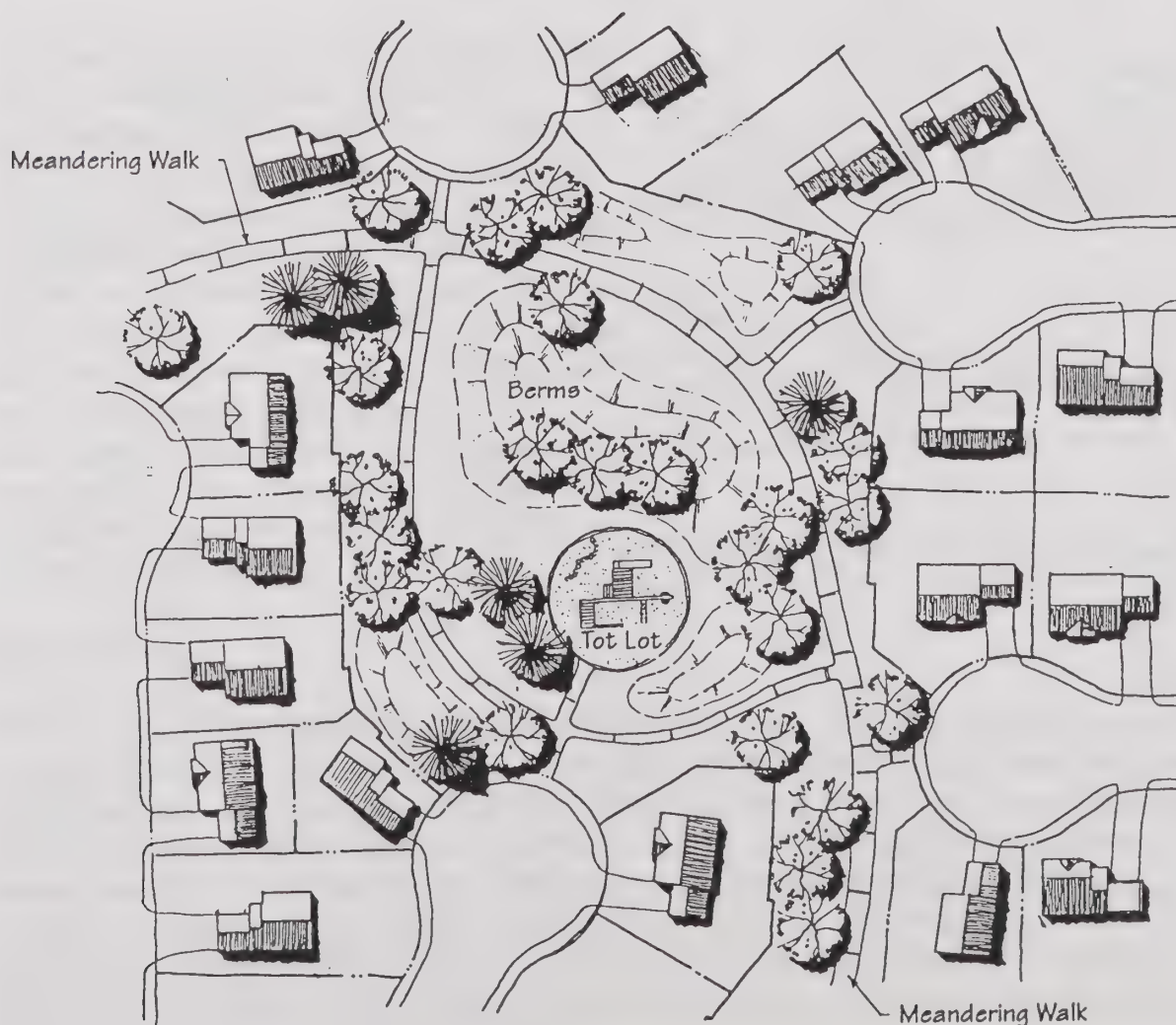


Figure LU-2; Pocket Park

Height and Bulk

Often, simple architectural features can be added to an otherwise plain building to create visual interest. Different elevations and building design prevents the creation of a visual "dark alley". Figure LU-3 shows how infill projects can be designed to provide a smooth transition between existing structures. This attention to height and bulk ensures compatibility with other buildings in the neighborhood, and provides an opportunity to create visual interest. Another function of regulating height and bulk, is maintaining privacy in existing development during infill of vacant land.

To ensure that the privacy of existing and future residential developments is considered during review of new projects, multi-story structures adjacent to existing residential development should be restricted, or eliminated in certain instances. Additional building setbacks for the second and subsequent floors may be sufficient to protect the privacy of adjacent residential uses. Development requirements for multi-story structures next to future and planned residential areas will be a component of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

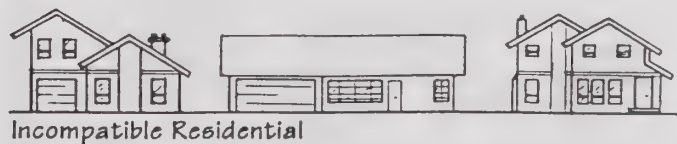


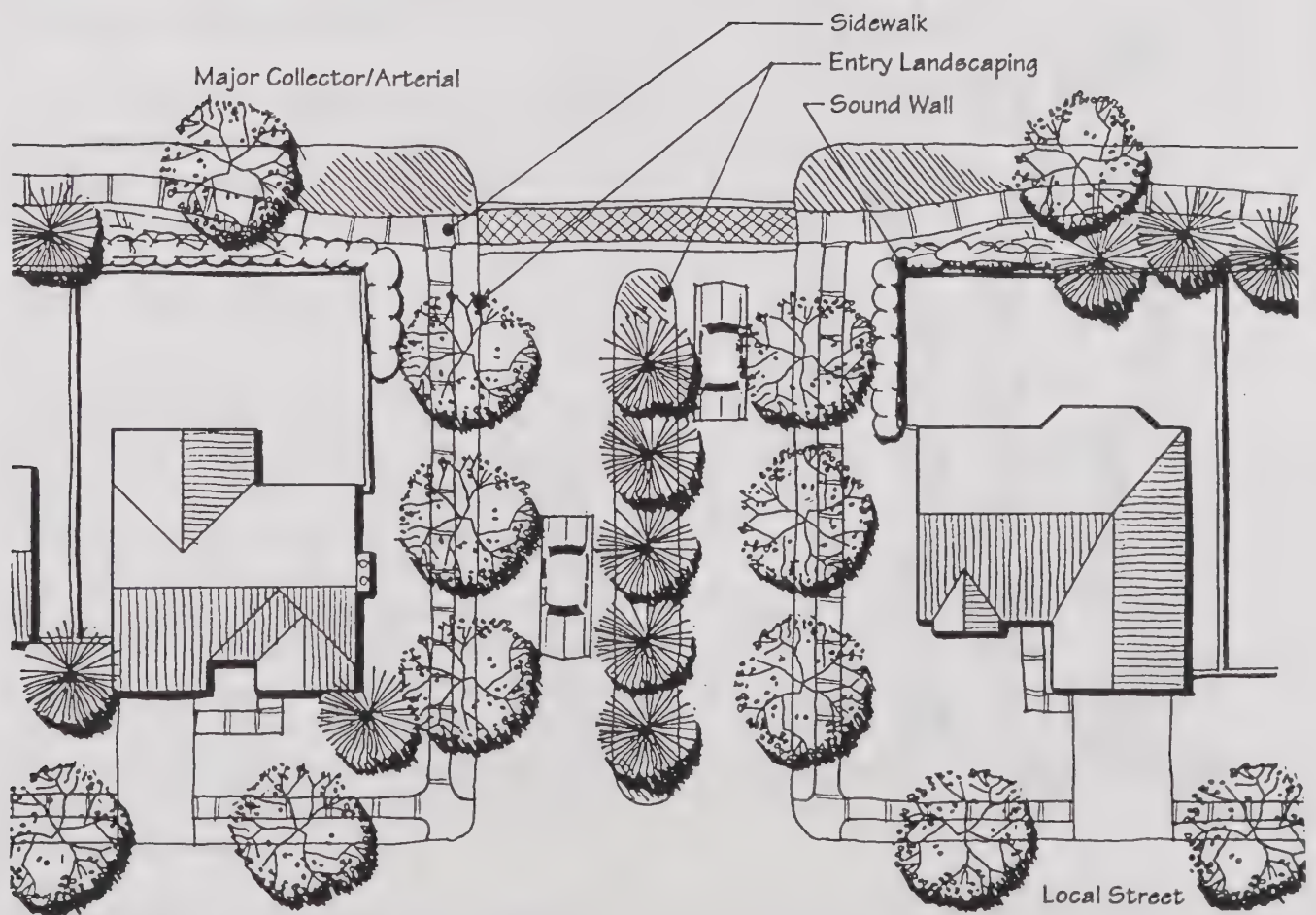
Figure LU-3; Height & Bulk Compatibility

Entryways

Well designed entryways help create a "sense of place", a unique environment intended to foster the idea of belonging. Successful entry design features can also help with the daily routine of going to work, school or shopping. City street trees, street lights and signs are often used to help the streetscape soften or enhance the surrounding development. Design features of subdivisions and apartment projects, including signs, pavement treatment, landscaping and lighting, help to identify the area as well as support the neighborhood. Business park features such as similar building colors, design and landscaping, help attract new industry and jobs by creating a clean and friendly atmosphere to conduct business.



Section Entryways



Entry Landscaping Plan View

Figure LU-4: Entryways

Figure LU-4 represents the Local Residential street design commonly used in single family subdivisions. The entryway treatment helps transition the pedestrian and driver from the major travel route to the quiet residential street. Park strips along the curb move pedestrians further from the travel way, and provide an opportunity for street trees to eventually shade both pedestrians and vehicles.

Varying Setbacks

This design concept shown in Figure LU-5 would require homes constructed in subdivisions have an "average setback" with an established minimum for garages and driveway lengths. By varying the setback of the structure, the intent is to create an appealing variety of depths and designs, and avoid lining up structures in a steady and unvarying row.

Used in conjunction with street trees, park strips and other design components, the new developments can mirror the best features of older neighborhoods in the City.

Planned Development Zones

Through the Planned Development process, a project proponent can approach the City with a concept that may change or remove many of the conventional zoning requirements. In a planned development proposal, housing units could be clustered around large open space areas or other development amenities resulting in higher localized densities, so long as the average density for the entire project site does not fall outside the minimum—maximum density range set forth in the General Plan Land Use designation.

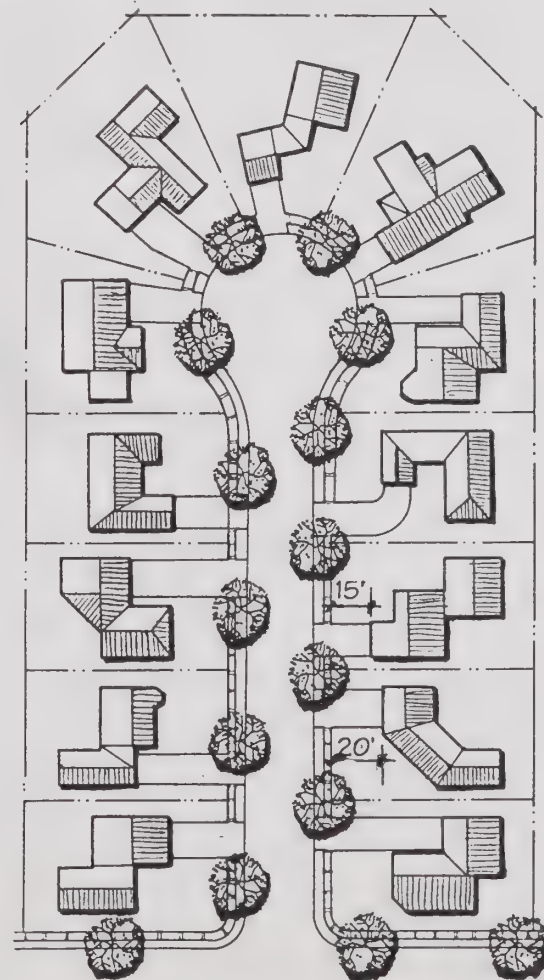


Figure LU-5; Varied Setbacks

Implementation of the concept is addressed through the Zoning Ordinance. If the City agrees to the development concept, the project specific Planned Development zoning can be approved. A Planned Development Zoning District will be necessary to achieve the higher density ranges specified for the underlying Land Use Designation. The City has established a list of expected project components necessary to initiate discussion on Planned Development applications. The Zoning Ordinance also contains a specific list of

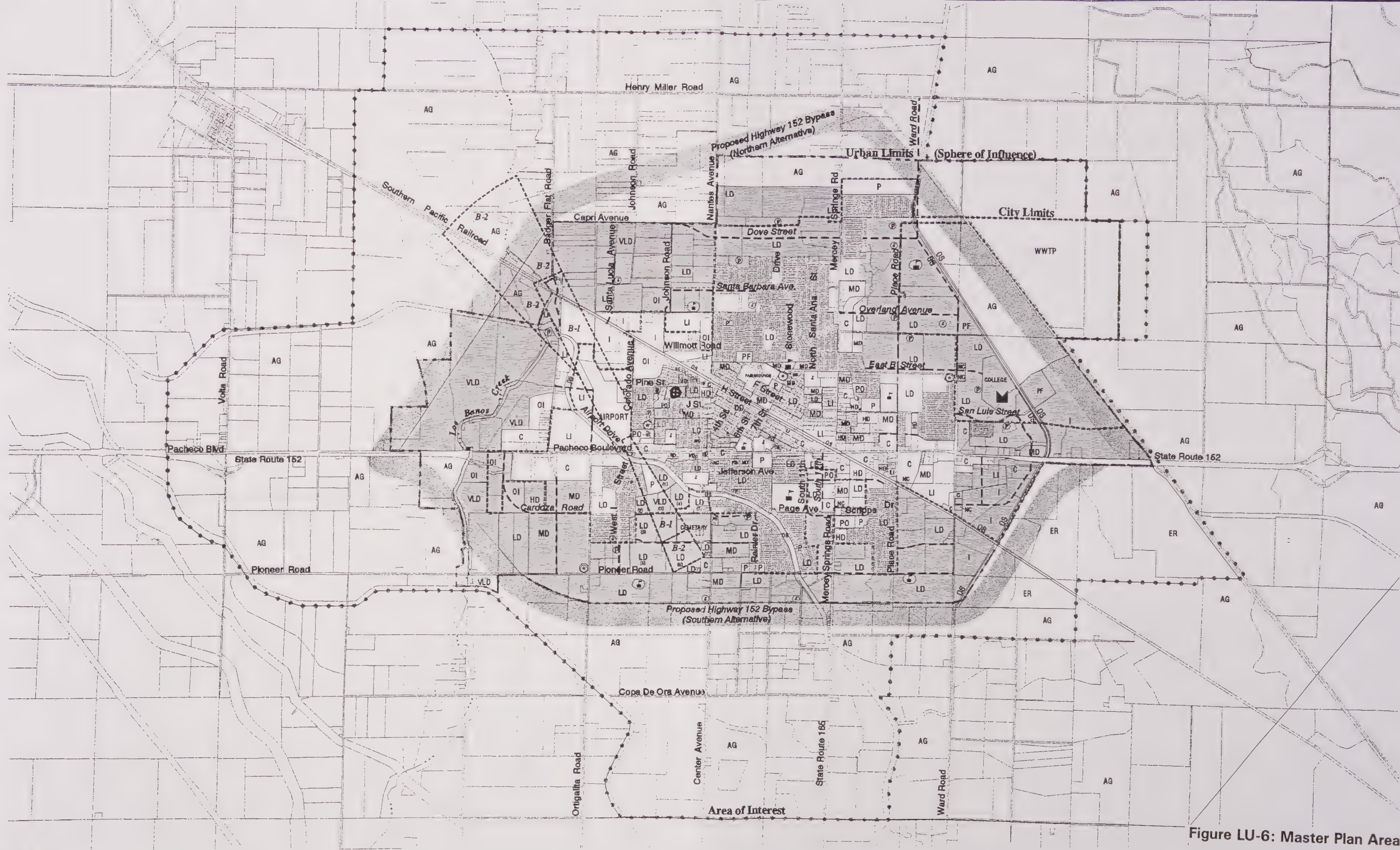
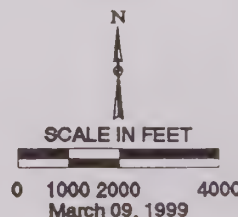


Figure LU-6: Master Plan Areas



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issues that the project proponent must address in a Planned Development application. Generally, they include:

- ☐ Overall density and intensity of the project;
- ☐ Design of the project components including bulk of buildings, varying setbacks, architectural features, parking and storage requirements;
- ☐ Access requirements;
- ☐ Impact on surrounding uses;
- ☐ Incorporation of amenities into the project to off-set any reduction in yard areas; and
- ☐ Timing of Development.

It is not the intent of the City to use the Planned Development process as a means of reducing lot sizes, or other development standards, without some amenities and control over the design of the project.

Master Plan Areas

The City has designated certain areas within the *Urban Limit Line* that will require the preparation of Area Plans or specific studies, development agreements (50 or more lots or parcels), including environmental and infrastructure analysis before the City can consider them for annexation and/or development. Issues within the City Limits and outside the City Limits include concerns over known endangered species and the requirement to plan for regional sewer, water needs, drainage needs, and circulation connectivity. In order to be considered for development, each of the Master Plan Areas indicated on Figure LU-6 will be required to provide, at a minimum, the following information:

- ☐ Comprehensive environmental analysis (with special attention to habitat issues near the San Luis Canal) for both the proposed project site and surrounding properties, regardless of property ownership; the use of buffers and "Resource Neutral" land uses as part of the overall design were is development approaching the Santa Fe Grade is expected to be included in the overall design.
- ☐ Complete infrastructure planning (roads, water, sewer, storm drainage, schools and other public services, etc.) which includes the entire Area Plan boundaries as established by the City in sufficient detail to determine how the proposed project will be served, responsibility for infrastructure development costs, timing of development, and how the proposed project would fit into the surrounding lands regardless of property ownership;
- ☐ Phasing and Development Schedule for the proposed project and a representation of full build-out for all property within the Area Plan; and
- ☐ Financing and phasing of infrastructure necessary to serve the proposed project. Additional information may be required as needed for each area. The intent is to provide Master Plans for large areas that can accommodate a range of

infrastructure improvements and mitigation measures. The overall planning can be at a conceptual level, but will need to show sufficient detail to determine overall viability.

Non-Residential Standards

Floor Area Ratios [FAR]

For non-residential uses, the General Plan specifies a maximum permitted ratio of gross floor area to site (Floor Area Ratio or FAR). The FAR is intended to regulate building bulk while allowing flexibility in determining the height and placement of the building on the lot consistent with the City Zoning Ordinance. In some cases the FAR is set to allow flexibility in the City Center, while similar development outside of the City Center may be held to a different standard.

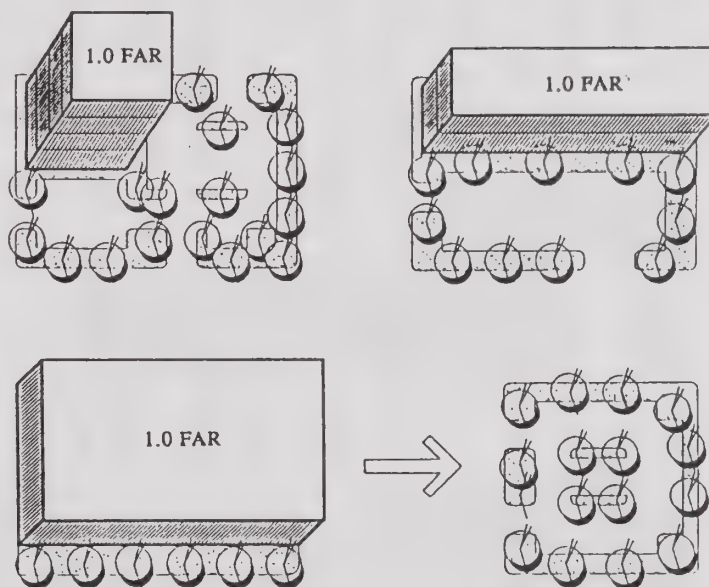


Figure LU-7; Floor Area Ratio

Using this approach for building coverage, a 10,000 square foot property with a FAR of 1.0, would be permitted to have a maximum of 10,000 square foot of building. Required building setbacks, height limitations, parking needs and landscaping, will affect total lot coverage, probably reducing the actual building size below the maximum allowable FAR. Development requirements are established through the zoning ordinance in conformance with the General Plan. Figure LU-7, depicts different FAR configurations including multi-story structures and off-site parking agreements.

ZONING CONSISTENCY

While the Land Use Element specifies a range of unit densities per acre, the City Zoning Ordinance regulates specific development standards within the permitted density range. Under a given Land Use Designation, several different development zones may be appropriate. Table LU-4, provides a listing of "typical" Zoning Districts for each General Plan Land Use Designation. The City of Los Banos Zoning Ordinance is, in most instances, hierarchical in that uses of a lower intensity zone are usually allowed in the next more intensive zone. To allow for this, the residential unit per acre ranges overlap as do the floor area ratios for commercial and industrial designations. Some of the General Plan Designations will require the establishment of new zone districts before they can be implemented.

Zoning Consistency, Density & Intensity									Table LU-4
Land Use Designation	Unit Density ¹			Floor Area Ratio ²			Max. Pop. Acre	Min. Lot Size Sq. Ft.	Typical Zone District
	min	typ	max	min	typ	max			
VLD, Very Low Density	1	2	3			0.40	12	20,000	R-A, Residential ⁴ , A, Agriculture ⁴
LD, Low Density Residential	2	5	7			0.40	28	20,000 6,000	R-A, Residential ⁴ , A, Agriculture ⁴ R-1, Low Density Residential P-D, Planned Development
MD, Medium Density Residential	7	10	17			0.40	51	6,000 1 acre	R-1, Low Density Residential R-2, Medium Density Residential T, Mobile Home Park Combining P-D, Planned Development, A, Agriculture ⁴
HD, High Density Residential	10	15	25			0.70	75	7,200	R-2, Medium Density Residential R-3, High Density Residential-Professional P-D, Planned Development, A,Agriculture ⁴
DD, Downtown District	7	10	15	0.50	1.00	2.00	51	6,000	DTC, Downtown Commercial District ⁴ DDR, Downtown Residential District ⁴
C, Commercial				0.25	0.40	0.60		6,000 2,000	C1, Retail Commercial, A,Agriculture ⁴ C2, General Commercial
NC, Neighborhood Commercial				0.25	0.40	0.60		6,000	C1, Retail Commercial, A, Agriculture ⁴
PO, Professional Office				0.25	0.50	0.60		20,000	PO, Professional Offices ⁴
OI, Office Industrial				0.25 0.25	0.35 0.35	0.50 0.35		20,000 20,000	OI, Office Industrial ⁴ , A, Agriculture ⁴ PM, Planned Industrial
LI & I, Light & Industrial				0.25	0.50	1.50		5,000	M, General Industrial, A, Agriculture ⁴
PF, Public Facilities				0.10		1.00			O-S, Open Space Combining PF, Public Facilities ⁴
OS, Open Space						0.01			O-S, Open Space Combining
Community College				0.10		1.00			PF, Public Facilities ⁴ (College Only)
A, Agriculture	0	<1	<1	0.01		0.05	<3		A, Agriculture ⁴
ER, Environmental Reserve						0.01			ER, Environmental Reserve ⁴

Notes: ¹ Units per Acre • ² Ratio of Building Area to Individual Lot • ³ Maximum Percentage of Lot Coverage • ⁴ New Zone District Needed

Density-Intensity

The density/intensity standards described in the General Plan do not guarantee that development projects will be approved at the maximum density or intensity specified for each classification. The existence of one or more development constraints could limit the density or intensity of development to less than the maximum allowed in the General Plan Designation. Typical examples of such development constraints include, but are not limited to: drainage issues, archaeological sites, wetlands and stream courses, easements, noise constraints, other environmental factors, community design requirements, and zoning regulations. In some cases, new development may not "fit" into the surrounding neighborhood for reasons of bulk, setback, architectural features, etc. This is often a concern with in-fill projects, and the City will review each project on a case-by-case basis.

Residential Designations

The Land Use Element and Diagram include four residential categories that range in density and intensity from a minimum of one unit per acre up to a maximum 25 units per acre. These categories are intended to:

- ☐ Identify areas throughout the planning area which are acceptable for housing;
- ☐ Clarify the overall type of housing to be developed within each category; and
- ☐ Allow for a mixture of housing types, lot sizes and affordability.

Each residential category includes a unit per acre minimum and maximum density specified in a range of housing units per gross acre. Units per gross acre is used because it is easier to understand and convey. Types of housing include single family units and multiple family units including duplexes and apartments. The Zoning Ordinance establishes minimum lot sizes and basic development standards that may reduce the actual unit yield below the maximum for a given Designation. In most cases a Planned Development Zoning District will be needed to achieve the maximum allowable density.

VLD, Very Low Density Residential: 1 - 3 dwelling units/gross acre

This category is characterized by larger "estate-style" lots for single family residential development. Typical lot sizes would range from 15,000 to 20,000 square feet. Except in extraordinary circumstances, it is not expected that lots greater than one acre in size would be developed within the City limits. Typical development in this Land Use Designation would provide one-half acre lots for approximately two units per acre.

LD, Low Density Residential: 2 - 7 dwelling units/gross acre

This Designation includes single family development on lot sizes more typically found in urban settings. Individual lot sizes would typically range from 6,000 to 12,000 square feet in size. Under a Planned Development Zoning District, smaller lot sizes may be

permitted when clustered around an open space amenity, such as a park, golf course, open space, or lake. Typical single family subdivisions provide between four and five dwelling units per acre.

MD, Medium Density Residential: 7 - 17 dwelling units/gross acre

This Designation allows typical duplex or lower density apartment complexes and other non-traditional designs such as zero lot lines, patio homes, and townhomes with lot sizes ranging from 4,500 to 7,500 square feet for single family developments. The average size of newly created lots are expected to be approximately 6,000 square feet minimum with the number of units per lot based on 2,500 square feet of area for each dwelling unit. The minimum size of newly created medium density residential zones shall be one acre, unless part of a Planned Development or an infill development. Existing nonconforming lots can also be developed at 3,000 square feet of lot area for each dwelling unit. It is intended that development be conveniently serviced by neighborhood commercial and recreational facilities and have access to major collector or arterial streets. This designation is often sought for in-fill development in existing neighborhoods. Typical Development under this land use designation is 10 units per acre.

HD, High Density Residential: 10 - 25 dwelling units/gross acre

This Designation is intended primarily for multi-family apartment and condominium development in proximity to major arterial streets, commercial and recreational facilities, and employment centers. When new lots are created by the parcel map or subdivision process, the minimum lot area is to be 7,200 square feet. and the number of units per lot is based on 1,200 square feet of area for each dwelling unit. Typical Development under this land use designation is 15 units per acre.

Downtown District

The Downtown District is the land use designation for the historic heart of the City. Existing uses in this Designation are mixed, containing service and retail commercial uses, private and government offices, public schools, and churches, warehousing and manufacturing commercial uses, and limited single family and multi-family residential uses. Some of the uses are located above or behind commercial uses. In order to preserve the integrity of the Downtown District, and encourage its continued vitality and economic strength, zoning within this Designation will recognize two different, but complementary, zoning districts.

DD, Downtown District 0.50 - 2.0 FAR

The City's Downtown District has its own unique character as a pedestrian-oriented, concentrated area of retail, service and professional office uses. Future development should enhance the vitality of the Downtown District. Over time the Downtown District will evolve into a more unique and focused commercial and entertainment center of the

community while retaining a diversity of commercial and residential uses. Uses in this designation include professional office, retail commercial and limited residential. The uses are intentionally mixed to allow the maximum development opportunity. Typical FAR is expected to be 1.0.

Development requirements for the Downtown District will be established through a Downtown Plan and incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance. Two separate zoning districts are anticipated to implement the Downtown District Specific Plan, these include:

DTC, Downtown Commercial District: 0.50 - 2.00 FAR

This District represents the commercial core of Los Banos, and contains the government and financial heart of the community. Additional government and business uses will be permitted, with limited residential uses conditionally approved on the second floor of commercial buildings. Land use regulations are intended to maintain the "Main Street" look and function of the District, including the promotion of pedestrian oriented shopping and dining opportunities. The District would serve both community-wide and neighborhood commercial demand. Store front churches may be allowed, however an overabundance of churches occupying otherwise commercially oriented space will be discouraged.

DRD, Downtown Residential District: 0.50 - 2.00 FAR; 7 - 17 dwelling units/gross acre

Surrounding the DRD, this District's primary function is to provide single family and multi-family residential uses, low impact commercial uses such as professional offices and some retail commercial uses. Typical Development under this land use designation is 10 units per acre. The District will serve as an entry and transition into the DRD, and preserve the historic housing and lot design. (i.e. narrow lots, reduced setbacks, parkways, alley vehicle access) Properties in the District will be enhanced through an active program to preserve and rehabilitate the existing housing stock.

Professional Office Uses

PO, Office 0.25 - 0.60 FAR

This Designation is intended for non-retail, business and professional offices. Except in the Downtown District, no residential uses would be permitted within a PO Designation. New PO sites should be 20,000 square feet or larger to encourage smaller offices to locate in the Downtown District. A typical FAR for this Designation is 0.50.

OI, Office Industrial: 0.25 - 0.50 FAR

This designation is designed to accommodate office uses that have a need for some warehousing, fabrication or testing areas. Typically constructed as a series of suites, development under this designation would be expected to include small repair shops, engineering firms, agricultural services, contractor offices and limited storage yards, printers, mail sorting operations, route sales offices and storage, business parks with a range of uses that may include limited retail sales, ect., No outside storage of either raw materials or finished products would be permitted. Average FARs are expected to be between 0.35 and 0.40. Landscaping and building design requirements will be similar to those required for Professional Office construction.

Other Commercial & Industrial Designations

Specific land uses described in each Designation are cited as examples of typical uses and should not be considered a comprehensive list of allowable or conditional uses. The Zoning Ordinance establishes allowable uses, conditional uses for each zone district, and other uses approved through administrative action, for each zone district. Both a range of Floor Area Ratios, FAR, and typical FARs are provided for each Land Use. Typical FARs are used to calculate anticipated employment generation, lot coverage and land need.

Further definition of the commercial types is established in the Zoning Ordinance, based on the following general discussion:

NC, Neighborhood Commercial: 0.25 - 0.60 FAR

This zone district would include convenience commercial and neighborhood shopping centers providing a range of necessary day-to-day retail goods and services serving a localized market. Neighborhood commercial centers are typically developed at about one mile intervals on a single corner of the intersection of collector streets, or arterial and collector streets. Development is limited with major anchor uses not exceeding 45,000 square feet with other supporting services such as drugstores, laundromats, barber and beauty shops, restaurants, auto parts stores, service stations, and other similar uses to serve the day to day needs of the surrounding residential development. Street and parking lot landscaping shall integrate the site with the balance of the neighborhoods. This zoning is intended for parcels no larger than five acres in size. A typical FAR for this zone district would be 0.40.

C, Commercial: 0.25 - .60 FAR

This zone district would include a variety of commercial uses that serve both a large local area and, to some extent, the region. Typically, C development is integral with, and forms a commercial concentration with, surrounding offices, possibly regional commercial uses, and higher density development served by a combination of collector and arterial streets. New C development should include multiple anchor tenants such as

a large grocery-drugstore combination. There should also be a larger number and/or variety of smaller tenant stores. Street and parking lot landscaping shall be installed and maintained to promote a pleasing visual environment. New C districts should typically be less than 30 acres in size and located at major arterial intersections with a FAR of approximately 0.40. Existing C sites, could be as small as 6,000 square feet.

LI, Light Industrial: 0.25 - 0.70 FAR

This Designation is intended for light industrial operations, and could include large office uses. Uses may include light manufacturing, warehousing, public and quasi-public facilities and operations, offices and administration facilities, research and development, and support business and commercial facilities. These areas may be characterized by high truck traffic, greater employment density and significant on-site material storage needs. Uses would be conducted mostly within buildings or structures with some outside storage or activity permitted. Light Industrial Designations are appropriate between residential and other industrial uses, or commercial and heavy industrial uses where minimal environmental conflicts can be demonstrated between the use and adjacent development. To the extent allowed by parcels, development within this Land Use is typically characterized by landscaped street frontages and a business park setting. A typical FAR for this Designation is 0.40.

Uses not permitted within this Designation are those that require open air storage of large quantities of raw, or semi-refined products. Retail uses are discouraged in this category, but may be permitted as a supplemental use to a permitted use.

I, Industrial: 0.3 - 1.5 FAR

This Designation provides for industrial parks, manufacturing, truck terminals, public or quasi-public facilities and structures, including utility operations, fabrication, processing, assembling, warehousing, wholesale sales, research and development activities. This land use designation may include Light Industrial uses or business parks containing offices, shops and heavier commercial uses such as lumberyards, large retailers of appliances, heavy equipment rental, sale of mobile homes or fabricated housing and similar uses. These uses also include auto or truck repair facilities. This Designation differs from Light Industrial in that outside processing and storage of materials may be permitted. Incidental retail uses which have a direct relationship to the industrial use or meet the day to day needs, such as food and fuel, of employees working in the Industrial area. Due to potential land use conflicts, Heavy Industrial designated lands should be buffered from residential and commercial uses by LI or OI designated areas, or large open spaces. Care needs to be taken in designating new areas of Industrial so that new conflicts are not created. However, effective FAR may be limited because of airport safety height regulations. A typical FAR for Industrial development would be 0.50.

Other Land Use Designations

Other land use designations are used by the City to identify public facilities, or land that is not intended for intensive development, including agricultural land in the City used as a buffer area to potentially conflicting land uses (airport clear or approach zones). In some instances, the Designation is used to identify lands belonging to another governmental agency over which the City has limited land use control. Examples of this include schools and the county fairgrounds.

PF, Public Facilities: 0.10 - 1.0 FAR

This Designation includes schools, storm drainage basins, wastewater treatment facilities, pump sites, and other similar activities conducted on property owned by the City, County or other state, federal or local agencies. While larger public facilities are identified as PF, smaller facilities such as wastewater lift stations, water wells and substations, etc., can be located in any Land Use Designation. Due to the nature of this Designation, there is no way to determine a typical FAR.

Community College, Merced Community College Site: 0.10 - 1.0 FAR

This Designation is only shown on the Land Use Map in one location, North of Highway 152, and west of the San Luis Canal. The Merced Community College owns this property, and may develop the site as a new campus. A primary concern with development west of the San Luis Canal is land use compatibility between intensive uses and neighboring biotic habitat. No design for the facility has been completed, however the overall FAR is expected to be low. The College is expected to consider low intensity uses for the area near the San Luis Canal.

The City's approach to the Merced Community College site is to create a policy framework in which the College can begin to establish new facilities. It **is not** the intent of the City to fully complete the environmental process of this, or any other site, to the extent that no subsequent environmental review is necessary. It **is** expected, however, that the scope of subsequent studies and analysis will be site-specific. It will be the responsibility of the Merced Community College to prepare such analysis including environmental documents as the lead agency for construction.

OS, Open Space & Conservation: 0.01 maximum FAR

The Open Space & Conservation Designation identifies parks, pathways, storm drainage basins and water recharge areas, reservations for future freeway interchanges, areas designated for noise attenuation, and major landscape corridors along entryways into the City. While the OS Designation is intended primarily for public agency use, there are instances when private land may be designated OS. These would include land with storm drainage or other open space "easements" upon it, or private environmental reserves. As with the PF Designation, there is no typical FAR, but by its very nature, this Designation is expected to have a very low FAR.

AG, Agriculture: 0.01 to 0.05 FAR

Agricultural Land Use Designations are limited in scope and purpose within the City. Among the reasons for the Designation is to provide a buffer between sensitive and potentially conflicting land uses. A good example of the application of this Designation is the land between the San Luis canal and Santa Fe Grade above Highway 152 (and the associated industrial uses). Another purpose for the Designation is to allow the annexation of larger blocks of land to the City and remain in productive agriculture until time of development as an urban use. The agricultural area also contains the Highway 152 By-pass alternative corridors in which intensive development (particularly dwellings and substantial buildings) should be avoided. The typical FAR portrays large acreage with a single primary dwelling and associated out-buildings.

ER, Environmental Reserve

Although considered rare, it is possible that lands with conservation easements, environmental controls or restrictions may be annexed to the City. In this instance, the City will Designate the land ER, which specifically limits the potential future development rights. Lands with an ER Designation are considered important resources that need protection from intensive urban uses, especially residential development. Such annexations are purposeful with the intent of avoiding development pressure and to bring the land under tighter control of City ordinances and restrictions

GOALS

The goals of the Land Use Element are to:

- ☐ Seek to expand job-creating and revenue-generating activities, increasing the level of retail, commercial service and industrial expansion which is necessary to support government services.
- ☐ Seek to maximize the potential of the community as a place of affordable residence.
- ☐ Ensure the City's future growth will proceed in an orderly manner that promotes efficient and equitable provision of public services and provides for the protection of sensitive agricultural and wetland ecosystems.
- ☐ Ensure the City's future growth will proceed in an orderly manner that promotes efficient and equitable provision of public services.
- ☐ Encourage development of vacant or underutilized land within the City Limits.
- ☐ Seek to manage the rate of urban expansion at a level which does not exceed an average of 4% annually or exceed the capacity of the City to provide the necessary levels of community services and facilities required to accommodate such growth.
- ☐ Establish community design guidelines for new development and revitalization projects that reflect high standards of community development, appearance and image.

Residential Development

Objectives, Policies & Programs

Following are the Objectives, Policies, and Programs relating to residential uses. More detailed information on housing types, program policies and implementation is found in the Housing Element.

OBJECTIVE LU 1

Maintain a balance between the cost of providing efficient community services and the benefits associated with continued growth.

POLICY LU 1.1

Development proposals shall be reviewed to ensure that impact on public services and facilities, and significant environmental impacts have been mitigated to the extent feasible.

Program LU 1.1-A

Maintain, and update as required, master plans for water, sewer, drainage, circulation, parks and recreation, and other public facilities including fire stations.

Program LU 1.1-B

The City shall adopt a Capital Improvement Program that addresses the short- and long-term infrastructure needs of the City. The Capital Improvement Program shall identify funding sources, including assessment districts, general fund, grants, state subventions and fees available to fund the projects.

Program LU 1.1-C

The City shall prepare and maintain a development fee structure which provides revenue to off-set infrastructure costs and implement the Capital Improvement Program. The structure may also allow development density increases to off-set excess dedication.

OBJECTIVE LU 2

Develop and maintain a pattern of residential land uses that provides for a variety and balance of densities and a mixture of different dwelling and tenure types.

POLICY LU 2.1

Residential development shall be consistent with the density ranges included in Table LU-3. Lower densities may be permitted when the City makes all of the following findings:

- A. That the development is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and will not have a detrimental effect on existing or future higher intensity land uses

such as commercial, multi-family housing, or circulation and transportation systems.

- B. That the development will contribute to the infrastructure Capital Improvement Fund in an amount equal to the density assumed for the area in the preparation of infrastructure plans or fee schedules, or that no net loss of revenue to the fund will result from the reduction in density.
- C. That the reduction in density is necessary to achieve superior quality development with respect to site planning and open space recreation facilities and/or the preservation of natural resources such as mature trees, sloughs, or habitat areas.
- D. That the density reduction will not prevent the City from achieving its goals for low and moderate income housing as described in the Housing Element.

OBJECTIVE LU 3

Provide single family residential neighborhoods with a variety of cost ranges dispersed throughout the City.

POLICY LU 3.1

New in-fill development shall conform to the character, density and scale of existing residential neighborhoods.

POLICY LU 3.2

Single-family residential development proposals over 40 acres in size are encouraged to include a mixture of density and dwelling types, consistent with the land use designation and density range.

POLICY LU 3.3

Single-family residential development proposals over 5 gross acres or 20 dwelling units (which ever is less) in size shall include in the development proposal Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R's) that contain neighborhood development and maintenance standards. Such standards shall include a color pallet of acceptable exterior paint scheme for the neighborhood, maintenance standards for front yard landscaping and acceptable substitution for living plants and grasses located therein, and a definition of substandard maintenance conditions.

Program LU 3.3-A

The City of Los Banos can not and will not enforce CC&R's, however the City desires that residents of neighborhoods have alternative processes by which neighborhood disputes regarding the maintenance of dwellings and property can be pursued outside of requesting the City to intercede based on Municipal Code violations.

OBJECTIVE LU 4

Provide multi-family ownership and rental units in a variety of cost ranges dispersed throughout the City.

POLICY LU 4.1

Multi-family projects involving 50 or more housing units and Single-Family or PUD projects involving 100 or more units or lots may require phasing in order to mitigate potential adverse impacts on schools, recreation, circulation and traffic and other areas of local government service. Where phasing is required by the City, the City may also require project development under the terms of a Development Agreement as prescribed by Sections 65864 et. seq. of the California Planning Law.

POLICY LU 4.2

Multiple family projects shall be approved for a certain time as established by the Planning Commission and/or City Council. Generally, the time period shall be one year from the time of approval by the Planning Commission and/or City Council.

POLICY LU 4.3

Multiple family development shall be required to submit detailed architectural and site plans with the application request.

Program LU 4.3-A

The City shall develop design and development standards for multiple family developments. The design and development standards will include provision for site access, lighting, security, recreation and open space, interior and exterior landscaping, access and other public services.

Program LU 4.3-B

Multiple family units in excess of 16 units in size shall be required to maintain on-site management.

Program LU 4.3-C

The Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to restrict the development of multi-story structures adjacent to existing dwelling units without additional setback and/or assurance of privacy. Any multi-story structure proposed adjacent to existing or planned residential areas, shall provide at a minimum, building elevations showing the location and type of windows, balconies (including roof top patios), and air conditioning units above the first story. These features of the development shall be reviewed by the City to assure visual compatibility with existing units and residential privacy.

POLICY LU 4.4 (AQ)

Multiple Family development shall be planned near existing or projected commercial facilities and open space, and typically served by collector or arterial streets within 1/4 mile of the project.

POLICY LU 4.5

Mobile home parks shall be considered medium or high density residential Land Uses. High standards of development and maintenance with respect to the provision of recreation and open space, landscaping and exterior appearance of the development shall apply.

Program LU 4.5-A

The City shall develop design and development standards for mobile home parks. The design and development standards will include provision for recreation and open space, interior and exterior landscaping, adequate access and availability to public services such as solid waste collection and fire suppression services.

OBJECTIVE LU 5

Encourage special residential opportunities to meet the needs of the City's residents.

POLICY LU 5.1 (AQ)

Special residential land uses, such as senior housing, shall be distributed throughout the City to assure their accessibility to activity centers and shopping areas, and to provide the option of continuing to reside in neighborhoods of mixed economic, ethnic and age groups.

POLICY LU 5.2 (AQ)

Senior residential housing projects proposed on the periphery of the developed area of the City shall be required to provide evidence of adequate and affordable special transportation, such as vans, as part of project development.

POLICY LU 5.3 (AQ)

Home occupations may be permitted in single family residential areas where the use is clearly incidental and secondary to the use of the residence for dwelling purposes and does not constitute a present or potential nuisance to neighbors.

Program LU 5.3-A (AQ)

The Zoning Ordinance shall contain development standards for Home Occupations that have potential to generate traffic, noise, odor and other potential conflicts.

OBJECTIVE LU 6 (AQ)

Adopt design standards which encourage residential areas to have a "neighborhood orientation."

POLICY LU 6.1 (AQ)

New residential developments designed for individual lots, or clustered units shall have varied front yard setbacks.

Program LU 6.1-A (AQ)

Amend the Zoning Ordinance residential setback requirements to provide for average setbacks that allow parts of the dwelling to be closer to the roadway when the garage is set further off of the road.

OBJECTIVE LU 7 (AQ)

Create an enhanced streetscape environment through the use of landscape standards and pedestrian access along arterial and collector streets.

POLICY LU 7.1 (AQ)

Arterial and Major Collector streets in residential and commercial areas shall be landscaped to promote an inviting tree lined street appearance.

Program LU 7.1-A (AQ)

The City shall adopt streetscaping and street tree planting standards for Arterial and Major Collector Streets.

Program LU 7.1-B

The City shall investigate the alternative methods of paying for the long-term maintenance of the streetscape system including landscaping, street lighting, stormwater basin maintenance, and other public services.

POLICY LU 7.2 (AQ)

Where sound walls are required along arterial, major and minor collector streets, they shall be landscaped according to the Streetscaping standards adopted by the City, and where feasible combined with "daylighted" cul-de-sacs.

Program LU 7.2-A (AQ)

The City shall develop subdivision design guidelines which define design preferences, and include sound wall and "daylighted" cul-de-sac standards in the City subdivision development standards.

OBJECTIVE LU 8 (AQ)

Minimize conflicts between residential uses and other incompatible land uses.

POLICY LU 8.1 (AQ)

Infrastructure master plans shall limit system design to only providing capacity for development within the *Urban Limit Line*.

POLICY LU 8.2 (AQ)

Appropriate buffers or other effective measures shall be included in development plans to ensure that conflicts such as noise, odor, light and glare, dust, or other potentially significant adverse environmental conditions including major wetlands and significant wildlife habitats are minimized.

Program LU 8.2-A (AQ)

In order to protect industrial, agricultural and environmental reserve land uses from intrusion and impact of residential land uses, proponents of residential projects in proximity to existing industrial, agricultural and environmental reserve Land Use Designations or major wetlands or significant wildlife habitats shall be required to provide the City with a full and complete written discussion that addresses the project's impact on the viability of the existing or proposed industrial, agricultural or environmental reserve use. These discussions shall include noise, hazardous materials, emergency response and evacuation, air quality, odors, light and glare, traffic, public services and aesthetics. Proposals for Master Plans east of the San Luis Canal and development approaching the San Luis Canal from the west shall include a discussion of buffer areas along the Canal which may minimize adverse impacts on the Giant Garter Snake habitat (See Open Space Element).

POLICY LU 8.3 (AQ)

New development on the fringes of the City shall recognize the right of agriculture to exist and continue to operate in proximity to the development. Deed restrictions may be required which inform future residents of the right of agriculture to continue within the limits of the law without interference or protest from nearby property owners.

Program LU 8.3-A (AQ)

Development proposals within one thousand (1,000) feet of the Urban Limit Line shall be required to address the potential conflict with neighboring agricultural uses, and the City shall determine whether there is sufficient cause to require Deed restrictions to protect the right of agriculture to continue outside of the Urban Limit Line.

Program LU 8.3-B

Area Plans that are required between the San Luis Canal and the Santa Fe Grade shall include in the Plan reasonable designs to provide a buffer between identified sensitive habitats and ensure that development does not create significant adverse impacts on the identified sensitive habitats such as major wetlands and the habitat of the Giant Garter Snake where it has been identified as being present.

POLICY LU 8.4

Proposed residential, commercial, and industrial uses shall be consistent with the Los Banos Municipal Airport Plan and the Merced County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Program LU 8.4-A

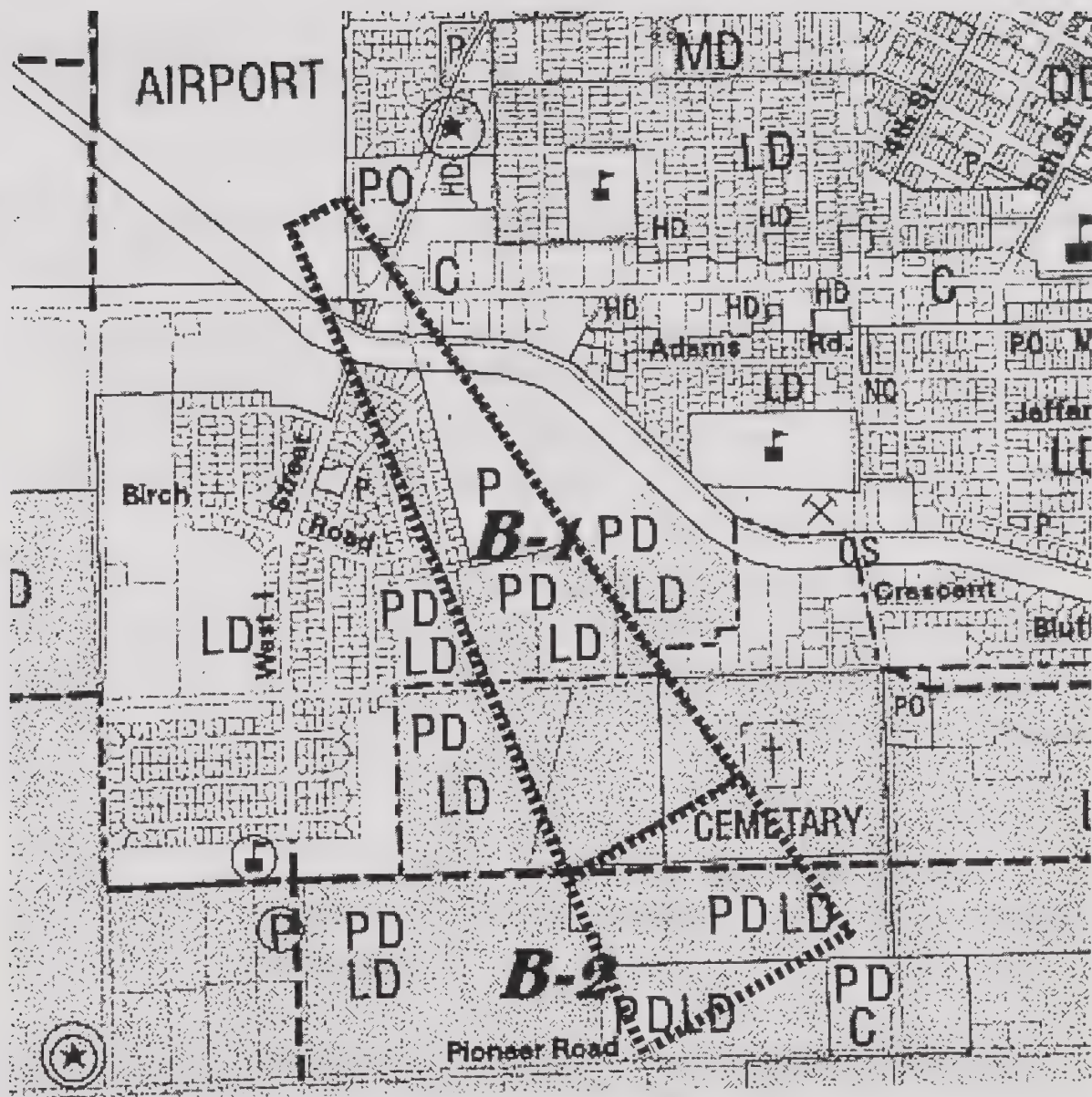
The City shall review and adopt a Los Banos Municipal Airport Master Plan and incorporate the Goals, Objectives, Policies and programs into the General Plan.

Program LU 8.4-B

The Merced County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan has delineated airport compatibility zones around the Los Banos Airport. These zones contain development criteria that should be implemented by the City. Most new development that could be considered incompatible with airport operations will be located south of the airport. It is the intent of the City and the purpose of the General Plan to avoid and minimize such conflicts through land use restrictions within the airport compatibility zones in the following areas:

- 1. In the B-1 Zone below Pacheco Blvd. the General Plan designates park development. Such park development shall be of low intensity use and not contain activities which would disrupt airport operations such as lighting, water bodies, or assembly areas.*
- 2. The residential density of the 79 acres within the B-1 zone, excluding the park area, shall not exceed 250 units. Residential densities should be reduced within the approach zone. Within the B-1 zone, south of the park on Birch Avenue and north of Cardoza Road, a 180-foot wide open space corridor shall be maintained centered on the centerline of the approach zone. This corridor shall be a combination of street right-of-way and setbacks.*
- 3. In the B-2 zone, excluding the cemetery and the developed 14 acres north of the cemetery, the undeveloped 157 acres shall not exceed 630 total residential units or approximately four units per acre.*
- 4. Any tentative subdivision map within zones B-1 or B-2 must be referred to the Merced County Airport Land Use Commission staff for review prior to City action.*
- 5. All buildings shall be limited to a maximum height restriction of two stories within either the B-1 or B-2 compatibility zone.*
- 6. The City will require aviation easements from all new development within the B-1 and B-2 zones. An aviation easement shall be recorded on any subdivision map and for each individual parcel developed within these zones.*
- 7. The City will require a recorded deed notification to be included in all disclosures to new residential land purchasers of potential air traffic within any B-1, B-2 or C airport compatibility zones.*
- 8. Any Lighting within the B-1 and B2 zones shall be hooded.*
- 9. Development within the B-1 and B-2 zones shall be "Planned Developments" (P-D).*

See Figure LU-7 for detail of Land Use Designations south of the Los Banos Airport.



Zone B-1

Residential density of 79 acres = 250 units max.

Zone B-2

Residential density of 157 acres = 630 units max.

■■■■■■■■■■ Airport Approach Zone

Figure LU 7; Land Use South of Los Banos Airport

Non-Residential

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE LU 9

Identify and plan for adequate land within the City to sustain commercial activity and which will:

- 1. Encourage regional retail shopping in Los Banos.**
- 2. Conveniently serve current and future residential needs.**
- 3. Provide employment opportunities.**
- 4. Contribute to the attractiveness of the community.**
- 5. Contribute to the City's revenue base.**

POLICY LU 9.1 (AQ)

Developers of commercial uses shall be required to participate in funding of transportation improvements necessary to accommodate the level of activity anticipated. Transportation improvements may include construction of major streets, signalization, public transit operational improvements, freeway ramps, bridges, interchanges and other major improvements to the extent such improvements are necessary to serve the commercial uses.

Program LU 9.1-A (AQ)

Development conditions of approval should reflect that the City's Capital Improvement Program has been considered, and that action is taken to ensure the Program's implementation.

OBJECTIVE LU 10

Promote the vitality of the Downtown District by encouraging it to become a unique shopping district with a variety of retail sales, restaurants, entertainment, public gathering facilities, offices, artisans, government offices, residential and open space uses.

POLICY LU 10.1 (AQ)

The City shall work with the Chamber of Commerce, and other interested groups to develop a Specific Plan for the precise planning and implementation of programs to support the continued evolution and vitality of the Downtown District. The Specific Plan shall include detailed development requirements and guidelines for the Downtown District.

POLICY LU 10.2

Mixed uses which support the overall intent of the Downtown District should be encouraged by the adoption of a flexible zoning district applicable only in the Downtown District.

Program LU 10.2-A

Amend the Zoning Ordinance to provide for a DTC, Downtown Commercial District and a DRD, Downtown Residential District as generally shown in Figure LU-1 as DD, Downtown. The intent of the Zones is to support and encourage Downtown District. Zoning regulations should allow flexibility in the combination of uses and building types. Uses may include retail sales, restaurants, offices, entertainment, artisans, government offices, limited residential, and open space, consistent with an adopted Downtown Plan.

POLICY LU 10.3

A mixture of public and private office development with supporting retail should be developed within and around the Downtown District to provide a location for private and public offices and services in the central area of Los Banos.

POLICY LU 10.4

The City shall continue to pursue the establishment of a Redevelopment Project Area for the Downtown District and supporting areas.

OBJECTIVE LU 11

Contribute to neighborhood identity by locating Neighborhood Commercial uses on major collector streets.

POLICY LU 11.1 (AQ)

Neighborhood Commercial sites shall provide neighborhood-oriented mixed uses that provide for convenience shopping and services.

POLICY LU 11.2

Neighborhood Centers shall be designed at a neighborhood scale and contribute to the visual value of the area.

Program LU 11.2-A

Site Plan review of Neighborhood Centers shall consider the following:

- 1. Location of ingress and egress in relation to surrounding uses and adjust those locations to minimize traffic conflicts.*
- 2. Promote comprehensive street and parking lot landscaping to ensure that the Neighborhood Center substantially contributes to the overall appearance of the area.*
- 3. Ensure that noise and lighting are not disruptive to adjacent uses. In particular delivery vehicles and drive through activities may require special accommodation.*
- 4. Design of structures is in scale and architecturally compatible with the existing or planned surrounding uses.*
- 5. Street and parking lot landscaping shall integrate the site with the balance of the neighborhood.*

POLICY LU 11.3 (AQ)

Neighborhood Commercial sites are intended to serve the daily needs of a surrounding residential population base, and generally be located one mile from each other at the intersections of Major Collector streets or in special circumstances at Arterial and Major Collector intersections. Special circumstances include the proximity of existing Neighborhood Commercial sites, projected land use, and location and configuration of Major Collector streets within the area.

POLICY LU 11.4

Neighborhood Commercial Designations should be limited to a parcel or parcels which, individually or in aggregate, total between 5 to 7 acres. Small corner parcels containing only a convenience store shall be discouraged in favor of an integrated commercial development. Convenience stores which have been demonstrated by a project proponent to be an integral part of the overall Neighborhood Commercial development are acceptable.

Program LU 11.4-A

Expansion of a Neighborhood Commercial Designation to adjacent properties may be permitted if the following findings can be made:

- 1. The adjoining parcel is too small to reasonably support its current Land Use Designation;*
- 2. Expansion of the Neighborhood Commercial Designation would not significantly impact other adjoining uses; and,*
- 3. That the expansion will not place significant new demands on traffic or other existing infrastructure facilities.*

POLICY LU 11.5

The City recognizes that commercial developments will occur over time as economic conditions warrant, however incremental development should not limit or preclude the integrated logical design of the full commercial center.

Program LU 11.5-A

When proposals are received by the City to develop only a portion of a parcel with Commercial Designation, that proposal shall be accompanied by a master plan which relates the proposed project to full build-out of the center and demonstrates how the incremental project fits with the overall circulation and parking, site layout, architectural design, and utility services plan for the entire center.

OBJECTIVE LU 12

Ensure that all commercial uses contribute to the resolution of traffic, public transit, and parking impacts created by additional traffic demands generated by those businesses.

POLICY LU 12.1 (AQ)

Development proponents are required to demonstrate that adequate circulation improvements including street improvements, signalization, bridges, public transit, and parking facilities are available or can be made available through mitigation measures to serve the proposed project.

Program LU 12.1-A (AQ)

Occupancy Permits will not be issued until associated traffic, public transit, and parking impact mitigation measures are completed or an agreement has been approved for their completion.

OBJECTIVE LU 13

Minimize conflicts between industry and other land uses by concentrating industrial activity within selected planning areas.

POLICY LU 13.1

Retail Uses shall only be permitted in industrial areas as a secondary use to a permitted use, such as manufacturing. Retail and service commercial uses which serve the daily needs of employees in the area may also be permitted.

POLICY LU 13.2

The City should seek to maintain a generous supply of industrial land which is attractive and desirable to potential industrial developers through the annexation of industrial land prior to receiving development applications.

Program LU 13.2-A (AQ)

New industrial development proposed near existing or planned residential land uses shall require to provide the City with a full and complete written discussion that addresses the project's impact on the viability of the existing or proposed residential land uses. The discussion shall include noise, hazardous materials, emergency response and evacuation, air quality, odors, light and glare, traffic, and aesthetics.

Program LU 13.2-B

Area Plans or development agreements may be required for industrial areas of the City, especially on the eastern side of the community where divisions of land in excess of 20 acres are proposed to ensure adequate infrastructure development, access and circulation, and buffering from sensitive habitat areas.

OBJECTIVE LU 14

Maintain, enhance, and promote the positive factors in the City's Industrial area.

POLICY LU 14.1 (AQ)

Appropriate truck routes shall be designated serving the industrial area which promote direct access and are functionally adequate.

Program LU 14.1-A (AQ)

Where capital improvements are necessary to provide suitable truck routes, the improvements shall be incorporated into the Capital Improvement Program adopted by the City. The Capital Improvement Program shall identify funding sources including, assessment districts, general fund, grants, state subventions, and fees available to fund such projects.

Growth Management

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE LU 15

Resist the premature conversion of agricultural lands to urban uses.

POLICY LU 15.1 (AQ)

The City supports Merced County General Plan objectives and policies which direct new industrial and commercial development to cities and require new residential development to be contiguous to urban development and to annex to the City, and to maintain limited agriculture land use designations between the *Urban Limit Line* and the City's General Plan *Area of Interest Boundary*.

POLICY LU 15.2 (AQ)

The City supports Merced County General Plan objectives and policies which protect agricultural lands by maintaining large parcel sizes and preventing the development of incompatible urban uses, specifically maintaining large parcels adjacent to urban areas prior to conversion to urban uses, prevent the division of parcels less than 10 acres in size within the City's General Plan *Area of Interest Boundary*.

POLICY LU 15.3 (AQ)

The City of Los Banos recognizes that the process to select a Highway 152 By-pass will involve substantial continuing study beyond the immediate timeframe for the adoption of this General Plan Update, and supports the continued planning efforts to select a preferred alternative for the by-pass. The City of Los Banos General Plan shall contain both the "northern" and "southern" by-pass alternatives shown as corridors on the Land Use Map. The City will not consider urban development within these corridors until such time as an alternative has been selected and requests Merced County not to approve urban development outside the City within these corridors until the selected alternative has been decided. Urban level development includes substantial buildings, structures, or dwellings.

POLICY LU 15.4

The City supports Merced County Local Agency Formation Commission policies that require General Plans to address both the Cortese -Knox Act and the Merced County LAFCo policies.

The City desires to control its growth through local comprehensive planning. Annexation of large tracts of land into the City with growth controls related to development phasing and infrastructure development through Area Plans, Specific Plans, or Development Agreements will allow that level of local control and management.

Program LU 15.4-A (AQ)

- a) *The Los Banos General Plan identifies its desired Sphere of Influence boundary and all planned land uses in the expanded sphere, and defines the boundary as the Urban Limit Line.*
- b) *The Los Banos General Plan contains policies regarding the phasing of future annexations which is consistent with LAFCo policies:*
 - 1. *The Urban Limit Line or urban development generally follows the Santa Fe Canal on the east, ½ mile west of Los Banos Creek on the west, and future alternative alignments of Highway 152 on the north and south.*
 - 2. *Urban land uses contained in the General Plan include density and intensity standards along with other development policies, and requirements for Area Plans, Specific Plans, and Development Agreements for newly annexed areas.*
 - 3. *Phasing of development shall be included in the adopted Area Plans, Specific Plans, and Development Agreements for newly annexed areas.*
 - 4. *Public infrastructure will be planned before development is approved, and availability of infrastructure will dictate development timing consistent with Area Plans, Specific Plans, and Development Agreements for newly annexed areas.*
 - 5. *Agricultural uses will be encouraged to continue until time of development, and where the potential for land use conflict exists "right to farm" conditions will be incorporated into development approvals. Irrigation water shall be retained until time of urban development.*

POLICY LU 15.5

The City will require contiguous urban development within the General Plan Urban Limit Line unless it can be demonstrated that development of property which is contiguous to existing urban development is unavailable or economically infeasible to develop. Development greater than ½ mile from existing urban uses within the *Urban Limit Line* shall not be permitted where intervening land is available and can be economically developed.

POLICY LU 15.6

The City shall seek to retain surface water rights in all annexed areas until the time of development to ensure that continued agricultural production of the land is not compromised by such annexation. Where feasible such water rights should be exchanged at the time of development for ground water recharge opportunities as part of a comprehensive water recharge program supported by the City.

OBJECTIVE LU 16

Buffer long-term viable agricultural land and sensitive ecological areas including major wetlands and significant wildlife habitats from urban encroachment.

POLICY LU 16.1

The City shall implement programs for development between the City Limits and the Urban Limit Line.

Program LU 16.1-A

Within, the Urban Limit Line, proposals for residential development shall be considered using the following criteria:

- 1. Residential development coterminous to agricultural and environmental reserve uses shall be strongly discouraged.*
- 2. Residential development that can not be buffered from agricultural and environmental reserve uses or major wetlands or significant wildlife habitat by non-residential development or physical features such as a highway, major canal, etc., shall demonstrate that an adequate buffer can be provided within the proposed residential project.*
- 3. The City shall review the type of buffer proposed by residential development with adjacent farming or land management agencies to determine adequacy prior to approval of a project.*
- 4. The residential project shall be responsible for maintaining any buffer areas.*

POLICY LU 16.2

The City may obtain agricultural easements for land within the *Area of Interest* or in other areas of Merced County to ensure that the lands remain in agricultural uses. Easements will run with the land, and will require the continued agricultural use of the land for the duration of the easement.

Program LU 16.2-A

The City will develop a program that sets the procedures for obtaining, valuation, adoption, administration and cancellation of agricultural easements. Some of the provisions of the program may include:

- 1. Requiring that water rights for the land be maintained.*
- 2. Linking value of the easement to property size and proximity to the City.*
- 3. Linking value of the easement to the existence of sensitive biotic areas.*
- 4. Using area farmers, agricultural experts and City Staff to determine value of the easement.*
- 5. Providing for long-term management of the easement through City Departments or private party organizations.*

OBJECTIVE LU 17 (AQ)

Adopt an Urban Limit Line that allows the scope and intensity of development to be planned before it occurs.

POLICY LU 17.1 (AQ)

Urban level development shall only occur within the City. Any urban development shall occur within the incorporated City and within the *Urban Limit Line* consistent with the land uses adopted by the General Plan.

OBJECTIVE LU 18 (AQ)

Reduce the number of annexations, but increase the size and level of overall planning of annexations by requiring area plans, specific plans and/or development agreements before rezoning and annexation.

POLICY LU 18.1 (AQ)

Area Plans or Specific Plans including development agreements prepared by property owners shall be required for new development in those areas indicated on Figure LU-6 prior to LAFCo recordation of the Certificate of Completion.

Program LU 18.1-A

The City shall require proposed development in those areas indicated in Figure LU-6 to prepare Area Plans as directed and approved by the City. The Area Plan and/or development agreement shall be completed as part of the annexation request to the City. An Area Plan may include more land than is currently being proposed for annexation or development to ensure overall compatibility with City infrastructure master plans and comprehensive land use planning for the entire area. All projects shall be consistent with the Area Plan. Should a project be proposed that is at variance with the Area Plan, the proponent shall be responsible for proposing an amendment to the Area Plan at the direction and approval of the City.

An Area Plan shall include at a minimum:

- 1. Comprehensive environmental analysis for both the proposed project site and surrounding properties, regardless of property ownership;*
- 2. Complete infrastructure planning (i.e. roads, water, sewer, storm drainage, schools and other public services, etc.) to include the entire Area Plan area in sufficient detail to determine how the proposed project will be served, responsibility for construction and paying for the system's construction, and how the proposed project would fit into the surrounding lands regardless of property ownership;*
- 3. Phasing and Development Schedule for the proposed project and a representation of full build-out for all property within the Master Plan Area;*
- 4. Financing and phasing of infrastructure necessary to serve the proposed project;*
- 5. A description and detailed explanation of any proposed variance from any adopted City development standard including streets, sidewalks, dwelling setbacks, common space, parks, or other public facilities.*
- 6. For proposals between the San Luis Canal and Santa Fe Grade shall include in the Plan development reasonable designs to provide a buffer*

between identified sensitive habitats and ensure that development does not create significant adverse impacts on the identified sensitive habitats such as major wetlands and within 300 feet of the habitat of the Giant Garter Snake where it has been identified as being present.

POLICY LU 18.2

Any development within the areas identified on Figure LU-6, where the proposed project will contain 50 or more lots or parcels shall provide for Development Agreements to be submitted with development proposals and it shall be affirmed by the City and property owner prior to a certificate of completion being recorded by LAFCo.

POLICY LU 18.3

The City may deny a Parcel Map within the areas identified on Figure LU-6, where, in the City's judgement, the purpose of the parcel map is to avoid requirements for comprehensive planning of future urban development.

City/County Relationships

Objectives Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE LU 19

Support Merced County General Plan goals, objectives, and policies that promote the Merced County Local Agency Formation adoption of the Los Banos Sphere of Influence and General Plan Land Use Plan for areas outside the City Limits.

POLICY LU 19.1 (AQ)

Support Merced County planning activities which direct commercial, industrial and residential and urban growth outside of the Los Banos *Area of Interest* Boundary to established unincorporated communities.

Program LU 19.1-A

Within the Area of Interest and outside the Urban Limit Line, both the City and County agree that they will not approve any changes in land use designation of zoning without prior agreement of the other party.

Program LU 19.1-B

Within the Urban Limit Line and outside the City Limits the County agrees not to change the land use designations of territory from a rural classification (i.e. agricultural). The County will maintain existing agricultural zoning within the non-urban designations. All discretionary approvals under the agricultural zoning would be subject to a mutual determination that they would not conflict with the City's adopted General Plan. Any discretionary approval by the County within those areas currently zoned for urban development within this area would be subject to adopted City development standards.

Policy LU 19.2

The City of Los Banos will seek Merced LAFCo amendment to the City's Sphere of Influence to match the City's Urban Limit Line according to the rules and regulations of Merced LAFCo.

OBJECTIVE LU 20

Maintain and enhance a cooperative relationship with Merced County, and the cities of Merced, Atwater, Gustine, Dos Palos, Livingston, school districts, water and irrigation districts through active participation in regional planning activities.

POLICY LU 20.1 (AQ)

Actively participate in regional transportation planning, solid waste disposal, ground water recharge, air quality, and other significant regional issues effecting multiple agencies.

Jobs/Housing Relationship

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE LU 21

Develop sufficient employment generating uses to maintain a positive fiscal condition and housing balance for the City.

POLICY LU 21.1 (AQ)

Land Use Designations for commercial, office, service commercial, and industrial should be held for such use to assure that there will be sufficient land available to create an economic base and job generating potential to serve future residents. Efforts to utilize this land for residential purposes should be discouraged unless proponents can demonstrate that there is a sufficient amount of land suitable for job creating uses, desirable and accessible locations, to maintain a positive fiscal and housing-to-job ratio in the City.

Community College Site

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE LU 22

To retain a Merced Community College Campus within the City of Los Banos.

POLICY LU 22.1

A specific Community College Land Use Designation shall be shown on the Land Use Diagram.

Program LU 22.1-A

The City shall indicate a Community College site on the Land Use Diagram, and include a specific Designation within the Land Use Element to provide for the ultimate development of a campus at this location.

Program LU 22.1-B

Any public infrastructure serving the Community College site will be sized to only allow for development of the site, and shall not be oversized to allow for development of land surrounding the site unless specifically included in an approved Area Plan and only serving urban uses west of the San Luis Canal.

[End of Land Use Element]

CIRCULATION AND TRANSPORTATION

INTRODUCTION

The adequacy and capacity of circulation systems influences the nature, extent and pace of urban development. As a result, the goals, policies and objectives of both the Land Use Element and Circulation Element must be complementary. Circulation not only pertains to the movement of automobiles, but the whole range of transportation alternatives: pedestrian, bicycle, air, truck, and rail. For the circulation system to be successful, all of these methods of transportation must be integrated with adjacent land uses. Such a system is considered "multi-modal" in that many different modes of transportation can be used to achieve a destination.

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

All street and highway facilities serve two basic functions; mobility and access. *Mobility* refers to the provision of vehicle movement, and *Access* refers to parking, storage or driveway access at the origin or destination of a person's trip. Each roadway type is designed to emphasize varying degrees of mobility or access. Unfortunately, these two functions are often not complementary. Unlimited access often degrades mobility, while mobility without access is acceptable for long trips—such as across town—but of little help for trips to the local store. To help increase mobility, access is occasionally restricted.

Roadways in Los Banos are classified by their function. Figure CU-1, located in the pocket at rear of document, depicts circulation classifications for roads within the General Plan Area based on the Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs of this Element.

DESIGN CONCEPT

Efficient roadway design allows for both local and long distance trips, and provides an efficient means to move about the City. Most people live on a Local Street or Cul-de-sac that is designed to service just a few residential homes. Collector streets gather traffic from several Local Streets, and direct it toward Collector and then Major Collector or Arterial streets. Major Collector and Arterial streets serve to move large amounts of traffic longer distances—across town for example—as well as serving those developments that have high traffic demand. Arterials and Major Collector streets serve to connect the City to other highways and freeways, and from there to the rest of the nation. The hierarchy of street designations and their respective function is illustrated in Figure CU-2.

How a street is classified is based on its design (size and number of lanes), volume (number of cars that can pass over an average day), and the type of traffic that the street is likely to accommodate (industrial vs. residential). The "capacity" of a street system is a function of the volume of traffic and the number of lanes. The conclusions of this analysis result in a Level of Service determination.

Level of Service is typically ranked on a scale of "A" through "F", with "A" being the best level of service and "F" the worst, functioning streets are graded depending on the number of different grading criteria. Table CU-1 lists the standard Level of Service criteria and perceived differences between each level. The City of Los Banos has adopted a Level of Service "C" with temporary Level of Service "D" for peak afternoon periods at some intersections. This level of service is consistent with other communities, and provides for an affordable circulation system, while minimizing delays and inconvenience to the traveling public.

PROPOSED CIRCULATION SYSTEM

Expansion of roadways is made difficult and expensive if the land surrounding the roadway is already developed. Many of the roads in Los Banos are already developed to their maximum capability. The introduction of more traffic will lower the level of service with little possibility for improvement. To help alleviate some of the growth in traffic, a circular arterial is designed into the land use and circulation plan of the City that will ultimately connect several existing roadways and proposed new roads into a loop around the City. Streets lead into the City center from, and new employment opportunities are provided along, the loop road. In conjunction with the loop road, minor changes to the existing street patterns can help improve local traffic. Extending some roads through to an arterial can help reduce traffic loads on other streets. Intersection improvement and synchronization of traffic signals can also help in traffic movement. It is also possible to increase the efficiency (mobility) of major roadways by removing minor street intersections.

New roadways are planned for a standard width and construction style to ensure design consistency and integration. In some instances however, the actual right-of-way may be different than planned to accommodate existing development. Figure CU-3 lists typical standards used to determine right-of-way requirements for the different roadway classifications. The specifications identified in Figure CU-3 are considered the minimum typically acceptable, and may change based on landscaping, easements, noise attenuation, access restrictions or accommodation of turning, merging, and other localized traffic movement. The final right-of-way requirement and number of lanes is based on the anticipated level of service needed to accommodate development around a given street and intersection.

Level of Service [LOS] Description			Table CU-1
LOS	Conditions	Subjective Description	Percent of Maximum Capacity
A	Free Flow	<i>Users are unaffected by other traffic, freedom of speed and movement, level of comfort, convenience and safety is excellent.</i>	0 - 59%
B	Stable Operation	<i>Users begin to notice other traffic, freedom of speed continues, but freedom to maneuver declines slightly.</i>	60% - 69%
C	Stable Operation	<i>Users are affected by other traffic, freedom of speed and maneuver are greatly affected. Traffic signals operate at maximum efficiency.</i>	70% - 79%
D	Approaching Unstable	<i>Users are greatly affected by traffic, comfort, convenience and safety significantly affected. Users wait one signal cycle to pass through an intersection.</i>	80% - 89%
E	Unstable Operations	<i>Traffic volumes at or near capacity, users wait several signals to pass through intersection.</i>	90% - 99%
F	Forced Flow	<i>Traffic volumes exceed the capacity of the street and traffic queues develop. Stop and go traffic conditions.</i>	100% - plus

Sources: 1985 Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209, Transportation Research Board.
1965 Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 87, Highway Research Board.

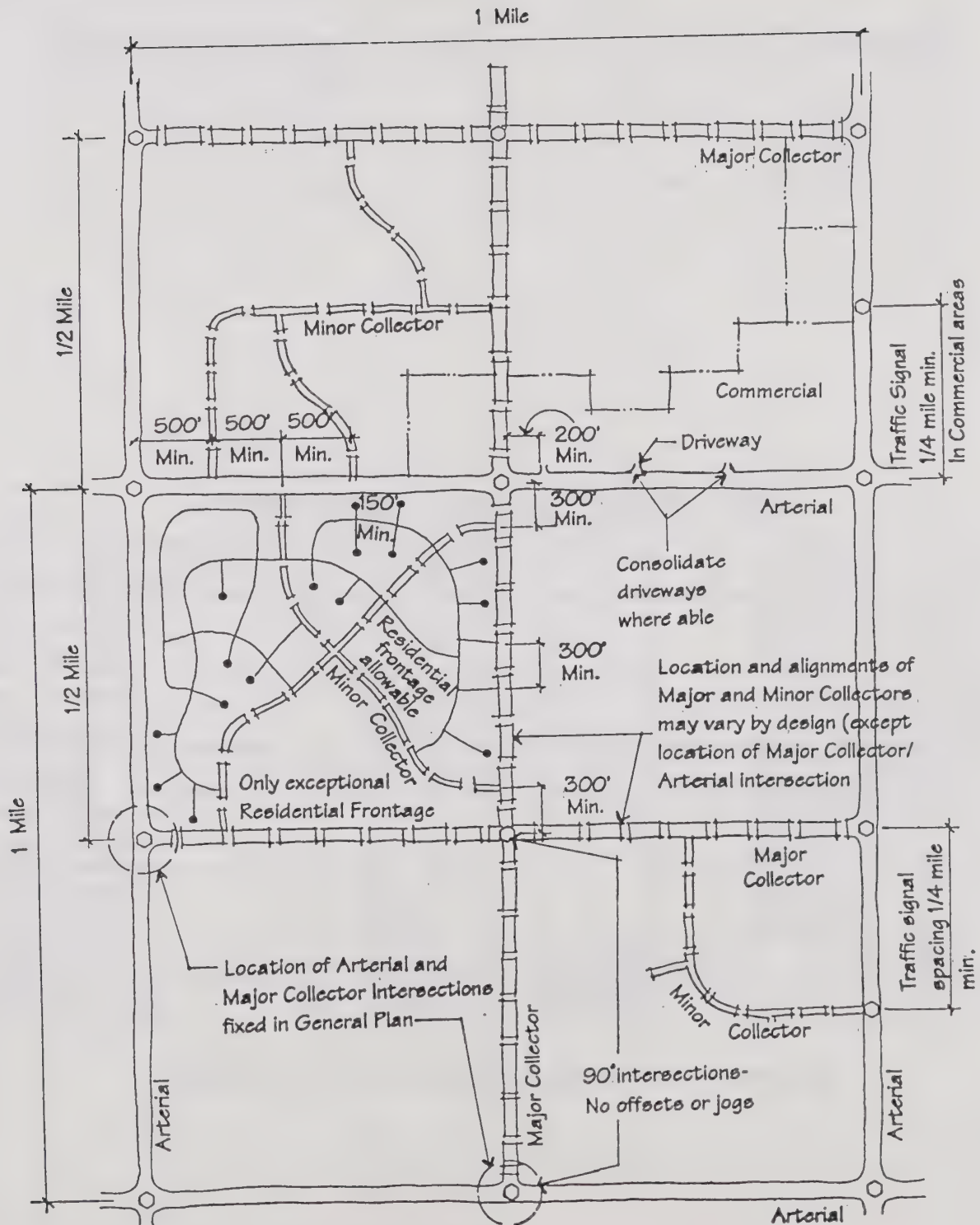
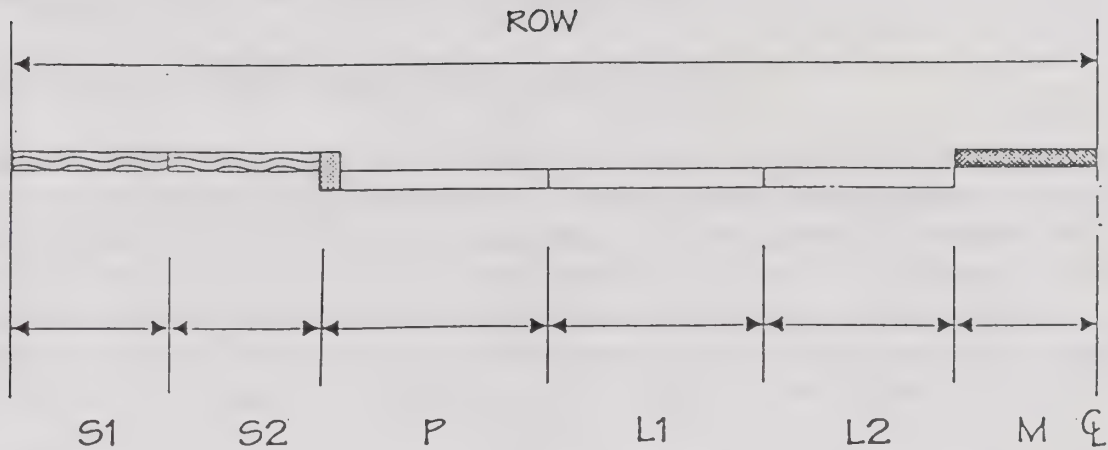


Figure CU-2: Hierarchy of Street Classification



Los Banos Half Street Section Designations

Street Designations	ROW	S1	S2	P	L1	L2	M
Local Residential	56'	4'	4'	8'	12'		
Minor Collector, Residential	60'	4'	4'	10'	12'		
Minor Collector, Commercial	60'		8'	10'	12'		
Industrial	66'	4'	4'	12'	12'		
Major Collector, Residential	72'	4'	4'	8'	12'		8'
Major Collector, Commercial	72'		8'	8'	12'		8'
Minor Arterial	84'		8'		14'	12'	8'
Major Arterial	96'		8'		18'	14'	8'

Figure CU-3: Typical Street Development Standards

EXISTING AND PROPOSED CIRCULATION SYSTEM

Existing Highway 152 (Pacheco Boulevard) Alignment

Highway 152 has an average daily traffic (ADT) count of about 26,500 vehicles between Mercey Springs Road and West "I" Street, utilizing two lanes in each direction without curb parking. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has projected an ADT that exceeds 35,000 by the year 2010, but it could reach as high as 40,000 if interregional traffic between the San Joaquin Valley and Central Coast Counties and the bay area increases substantially. This could occur when Highway 152 is constructed to full freeway or expressway standards between Highways 99 and 101.

Construction of a Highway 152 Bypass around Los Banos is not expected for the next 20 to 30 years. In the interim, Highway 152, known as Pacheco Boulevard within the City Limits, has been widened as part of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). This widening involved the installation of a continuous left-hand turn lane for much of its length and improvement of traffic movement at key intersections. These improvements have taken place generally within an 80 foot right-of-way, except at key intersections where the right-of-way may be over 100 feet. Because of STIP budget limitations, it may be necessary to make only partial improvements to the Highway as a first phase of development.

Proposed Highway 152 By-pass

A Highway 152 By-pass has been considered for the City of Los Banos since the early 1970's. Discussion and planning has intensified in the past 6 years with a number of studies and recommended alignments for the By-pass. Recognizing the on-going process and that a preferred route has yet to be selected, the City has opted to show "northern" and "southern" By-pass corridors. These corridors are intentionally wide and represent possible alignments. Tying the selection of the By-pass to the General Plan, at this point in time, would unnecessarily delay the adoption of the General Plan. The Land Use Element of the General Plan provides policies for the City and suggests to Merced County that the urban development in the corridors should not be undertaken until the By-pass route has been selected. Once the By-pass route has been selected, the City intends to complement that decision by amending the General Plan at that time.

The General Plan environmental document does not analyze the alternative alignments as it would be premature and other more specific analysis will be conducted at a later date by Caltrans or others.

Highway 165 (Mercey Springs Road)

The widening of Highway 165 (Mercey Springs Road) to four lanes through the community has been needed for a number of years. The City has been reserving right-

of-way as new projects are developed along Highway 165 and has adopted a Plan Line along the section of the highway north of Highway 152 from "B" Street to the City Limits.

While Highway 165 has only been an element of the State Highway system since the 1970's, its importance as the only north-south connection between Highway 99 and Interstate 5 will increase considerably, especially with interregional truck traffic. This could create another high traffic state highway through the community similar to the current conditions along Highway 152.

Intersection Improvements

Three of the major signalized intersections along Highway 152 are in need of improvement to provide for left-hand turns on north-south streets. The intersections, from west to east, are: Fourth Street, Sixth Street, and Seventh Street. Signalization will eventually be required at Place Road, Ward Road, and Ortigalita Road. The need for signalization at Ward and Place roads is dependant on residential development to the north and/ or substantial commercial and industrial development in the vicinity. Relocation of Highway 165 would also provide justification.

The only signal along Highway 165 (Mercey Springs) is at Highway 152. Additional signalization will be required eventually at the Highway 165 intersections with, (from north to south) future North Loop Road, Overland Road, East "B" Street, San Luis Street and Scripps/Page Streets.

Freeways

Although not in the immediate planning area, Interstate 5, five miles west of the City, is the primary freeway serving Los Banos. Highway 99, approximately 45 miles to the east or 30 miles to the north, provides secondary service via Highway 152 and Highway 165. Both Interstate 5 and Highway 99 serve as north/south connectors within the Central Valley.

As improvements are made to Highway 101 in Santa Clara and San Benito counties, the attraction of Los Banos to Bay Area commuters grows. Since improvements to Highway 101 will have an impact on the accessibility of Los Banos, it will be important in future years to include needs and demands of Los Banos in the planning of Highway 101 facilities.

Expressways

There are no expressways in the Los Banos planning area. The closest expressway is Highway 152 east and west of the planning area.

Arterials

Arterial streets, as illustrated in Figure CU-4, are generally four and five-lane routes typically constructed on right-of-ways of 94 to 114 feet in width, with some existing facilities 80 feet or less in width. Some existing two-lane roadways are used as arterials, usually in the Downtown District. These major streets provide for through traffic movement on a continuous route joining major traffic generators such as other arterials, expressways, and freeways. As such, direct driveway access is prohibited on arterials. Designation as an arterial is a result of street function, rather than physical size. Table CU-2 identifies existing and planned arterial streets in Los Banos.

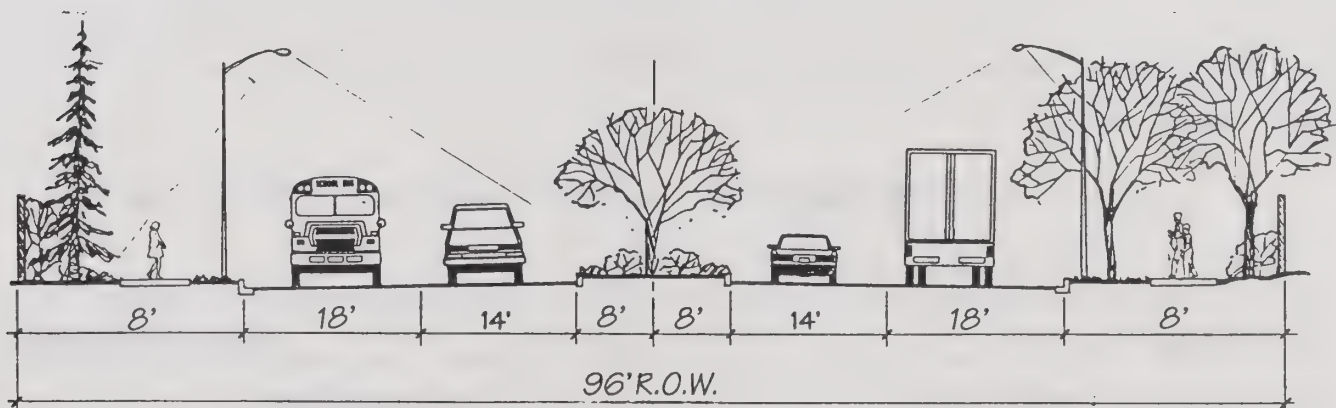


Figure CU-4: Typical Arterial Development Standards

Arterial Streets		Table CU-2
North-South	East-West	
Ward Road from Pioneer Road to Henry Miller Road. Mercey Springs (Highway 165) West "I" Street (South of Pacheco Blvd) Badger Flat Road (from Capri Avenue to Pioneer Road.)	"H" Street-Ingomar Grade (West of Seventh) "I" Street (North of Pacheco Blvd) Pacheco Boulevard (Highway 152) Pioneer Road from Los Banos Creek to Ward Road	

Collectors

Collector streets are typically two lanes with a center turn lane at intersections with major streets. Major collectors may have center turn lanes and medians. A major collector is illustrated in Figure CU-5. Medians in areas where homes front minor collector streets would prohibit left turns into driveways. Direct driveway access is prohibited on major collectors. Collectors allow traffic movement within an area and connect local streets to the arterial road system. Right-of-way widths are 60 feet for minor collectors, and 72 feet

for major collectors. Table CU-3 lists collector streets for the City of Los Banos. Similar to arterials, collectors are designated based on function more than physical size.

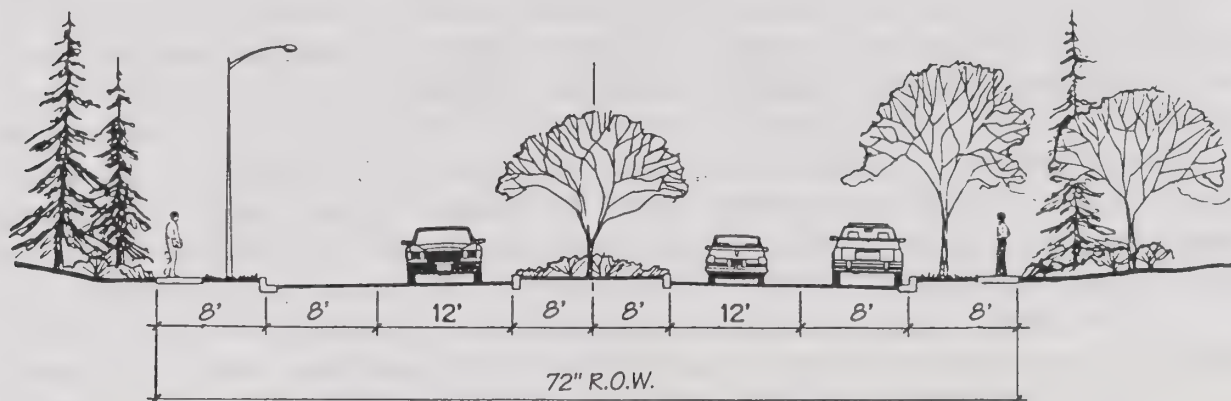


Figure CU-5: Typical Major Collector Development Standard

Collector Streets		Table CU-3
North-South	East-West	
Place Road from Pioneer Road to future east/west collector	Dove Street from future Ward Rd. to SR 165	
Center Avenue from Pioneer Road to Pacheco Blvd.	Santa Barbara Drive from SR 165 to Johnson Rd	
South Eleventh Street from Pacheco Blvd. to Pioneer Road	"G" Street from 7th St to SR 165	
South Seventh-from Page-Monte Vista to Pacheco Blvd.	San Luis Street from SR 165 to SR 152	
North Seventh-Stonewood from Pacheco Blvd. to future northern arterial	"H" Street east of 7th Street	
Crescent-Bluff-Rainier-Hill Avenue	"J" Street east of 4th Street	
North Street from Willmott Road to Overland Ave.	West "J" Street west of West "I" St	
North Second from "I" St to Willmott Road	"K" Street from 6th St to "I" St.	
South Fourth Street from Madison Ave to Pacheco Blvd.	Jefferson Avenue from Center to 11th St	
Sixth Street from Pacheco Blvd. to "H" Street	Overland Avenue from Ward Rd to 11th St	
Seventh Street (Pacheco Blvd to "I" Street)	East "B" Street from Ward Rd. to 7th St.	
Texas Avenue from "I" St to "H" Street	Willmott Road from SR 165 to Johnson Rd.	
South Johnson Road from Ingomar Grade to future Capri Avenue	Page Avenue Monte Vista Ave to SR 165	
Ortugalita Road from Pioneer Rd to Airport, to Badger Flat Road	Scripps Drive from SR 165 to Ward Rd.	
Nantes Road from Overland to future Capri Ave	Canal Farm Lane from SR 165 to Ward Rd.	
	Cardoza Road from Badger Flat to Center Ave.	
	Future Collector north of Pioneer Rd from "I" St to Rainer Dr.	
	Future Collector south of Cardoza Rd from Center to Bluff.	
	Madison form 11 th Street to SR 165	

Providing for Future Street Connections

The General Plan Land Use Map and the Circulation Map show future streets. Some of the future streets shown are neither arterial or collector streets, but provide for an equally important element of the City's circulation system. Extensions of existing streets as part of future subdivision design ensures that connection between neighborhoods is achieved and that connection to major elements of the arterial and collector system is reasonably accessible. The General Plan and Circulation Maps are meant to be descriptive of these types of connections. Future development designs for subdivisions and Area Plan/Specific Plans are expected to show how the interconnection of streets will be achieved and provide for this process. The City may engage in the establishment of "Plan Lines" which formally define the location of future streets to prevent development within the future right-of-way and as a means of informing property owners of the intent of the City to require development of a street in a particular location.

Local Residential Streets

Local Streets serve as land access facilities and constitute the largest part of the City's circulation system. Trip lengths are normally short and with very low traffic volumes. Typically local streets, as illustrated in Figure CU-6, are two-lanes with right-of-ways ranging from 56 feet for new facilities to 72 feet for some existing facilities. These streets provide direct access to residential areas, and as such, traffic volume, frequency of noise, and safety are very important issues to local residents. Often the quality of these streets may make the difference between a desirable or an undesirable neighborhood. The remaining balance of streets in the City are included in this definition and are not listed individually.

The location of sidewalk relative to the curb and gutter is also a development standard that has an impact on neighborhood appearance and pedestrian safety. The City encourages a "park strip" between the back edge of the curb and the sidewalk. This park strip will be maintained by the property owner and provides for additional sidewalk setback from the street for pedestrian safety and when properly maintained creates a more visual pleasing neighborhood appearance. However, the City Standards allow for a monolith sidewalk adjacent to the curb.

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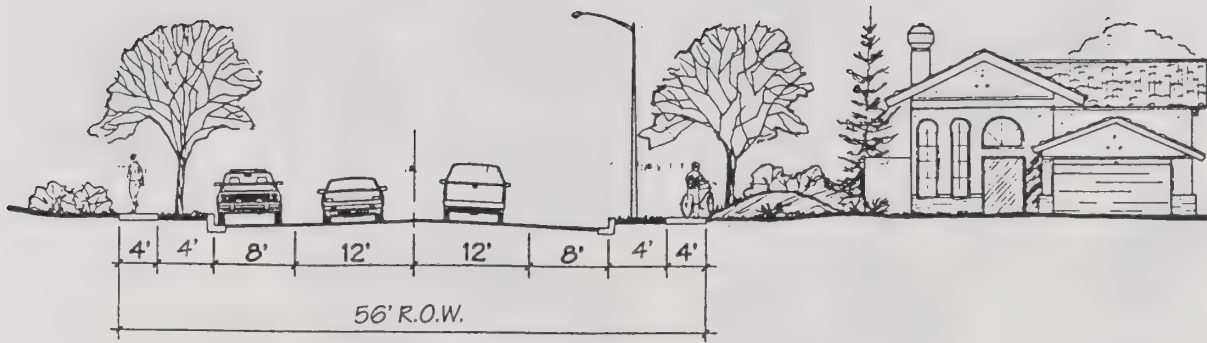


Figure CU-6: Typical Local Residential Street Development Standard

Local Non-residential Streets

These facilities are designed primarily to service industrial and retail commercial uses typically carrying a high percentage of truck traffic. This street type often links streets of higher classification near the Downtown District or in business parks. Due to high traffic volume and noise associated with truck traffic, these roadways should not intersect local residential streets.

Cul-de-Sacs

Literally "bottom of the sack," cul-de-sacs are dead-end streets that typically have large turn around areas at the very end. Cul-de-sac lots are considered desirable by some because of low traffic, privacy and the larger lot sizes that result from the unusual street design. Unfortunately, cul-de-sacs can pose safety problems if they are too long, and public services can be difficult to provide if there is no secondary access. One solution is the "open ended" cul-de-sac that provides pedestrian access to an adjacent collector or arterial, but prohibits vehicular access. See Figure CU-7 for a typical design of an open-ended cul-de-sac.

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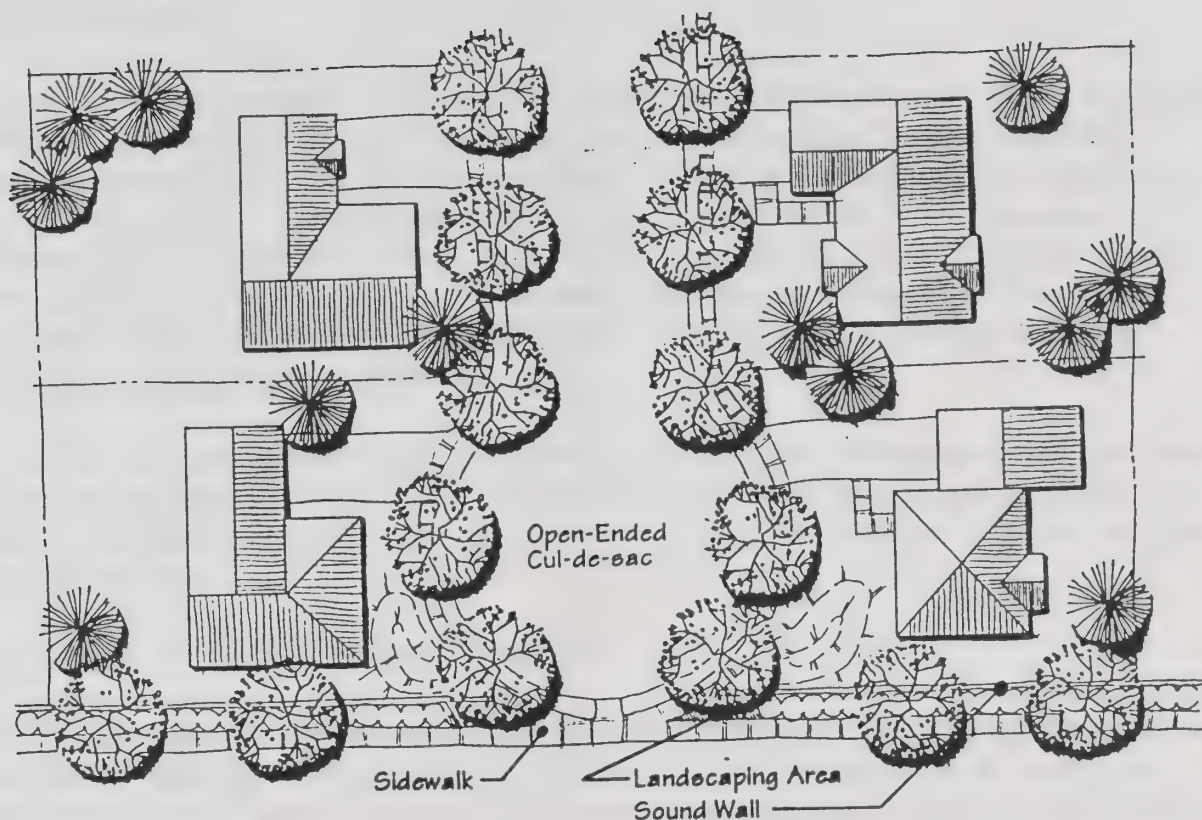


Figure CU-7: Typical Open Ended Cul-De-Sac Development Standard

Alleys

Alleys have historically provided secondary access to residential, commercial and industrial areas in older sections of town. Alleys are not required in newly developing areas of the City. The existing alleys often contain public utilities and are sometimes used as refuse collection routes. Occasionally, alleys may be used as access to parking areas for higher density residential development.

In the Downtown District, alleys can provide pedestrian links between parking and storefronts. Alleys can also be used to provide access to the rear of larger lots increasing design potential. Although alleys are considered secondary access, they often must accommodate heavy vehicles which requires improvements similar to streets.

Truck Routes

Truck routes shown in Figure CU-8 are intended to carry heavy weight commercial, industrial, and agricultural vehicles through and around the community with minimum disruption to local auto traffic and minimum annoyance to residential areas. Access to industrial sites should avoid use of any arterial or collector which provides direct access to existing or proposed residential areas.

Railroad Corridor

The Union Pacific Railroad corridor carries infrequent spur line freight traffic through the northwest quadrant of the City, primarily serving the various fruit packing facilities located along the railroad right-of-way between "G" Street and Mercey Springs Road (refer to Figure CU-8). The relatively minor traffic involved poses only occasional problems of traffic congestion when trains block major intersections. Not all crossings are protected by automatic signals and guards, including crossings at Willmott and Overland. Further development in the City should be required to participate in the funding of signals along the railroad corridor.

The railroad has ceased "through operations" in the City, and terminates the functional line short of the Highway 152 and 165 intersection. The City should actively seek to preserve the right-of-way for future transportation potential, and non-motorized access into the downtown.

Bicycle Routes and Pedestrian Circulation

The City is surrounded by natural and man-made features that lend themselves to joint use as non-motorized transportation enhancements with limited improvements and permission from the various owners. The canal banks, abandoned railroad right-of-way and Los Banos Creek could be used to circumnavigate the City without traveling on roadways. From these routes, Los Banos High School and several other destinations can be easily reached.

The City of Los Banos has adopted a "Commuter Bicycle Plan". This Plan is incorporated by reference into the Los Banos General Plan. The City is incorporating bicycle lanes and parks into a system which links residential, commercial and educational resources. Using a combination of on and off road bicycle lanes along canals, Los Banos Creek, rail road right-of-way, and major streets, illustrated in Figure CU-9, the City intends to link the Downtown District to new development and provide an attractive alternative to driving to the Downtown District. These non-motorized routes enhance the internal circulation system and provide alternative methods of commuting.

According to this Commuter Bikeway Plan, major employment areas, schools, recreation centers, residential areas and transportation destinations for bicyclist are the typical destinations for bicyclists in Los Banos. This identification of typical destinations led to the proposal of a total of twenty-two (22) projects in the Los Banos Bike Plan. The top five project priorities are listed in Table CU-4.

These recommended projects will construct bike paths, bike routes, and bike lanes where none presently exist.

As bike lanes, bike routes and bike paths are constructed, bicycle trips will increase. Preliminary estimates are that bicycle use should double in ten years.

Legend

- City Limits
- Urban Limits (S.O.I.)
- Area of Interest

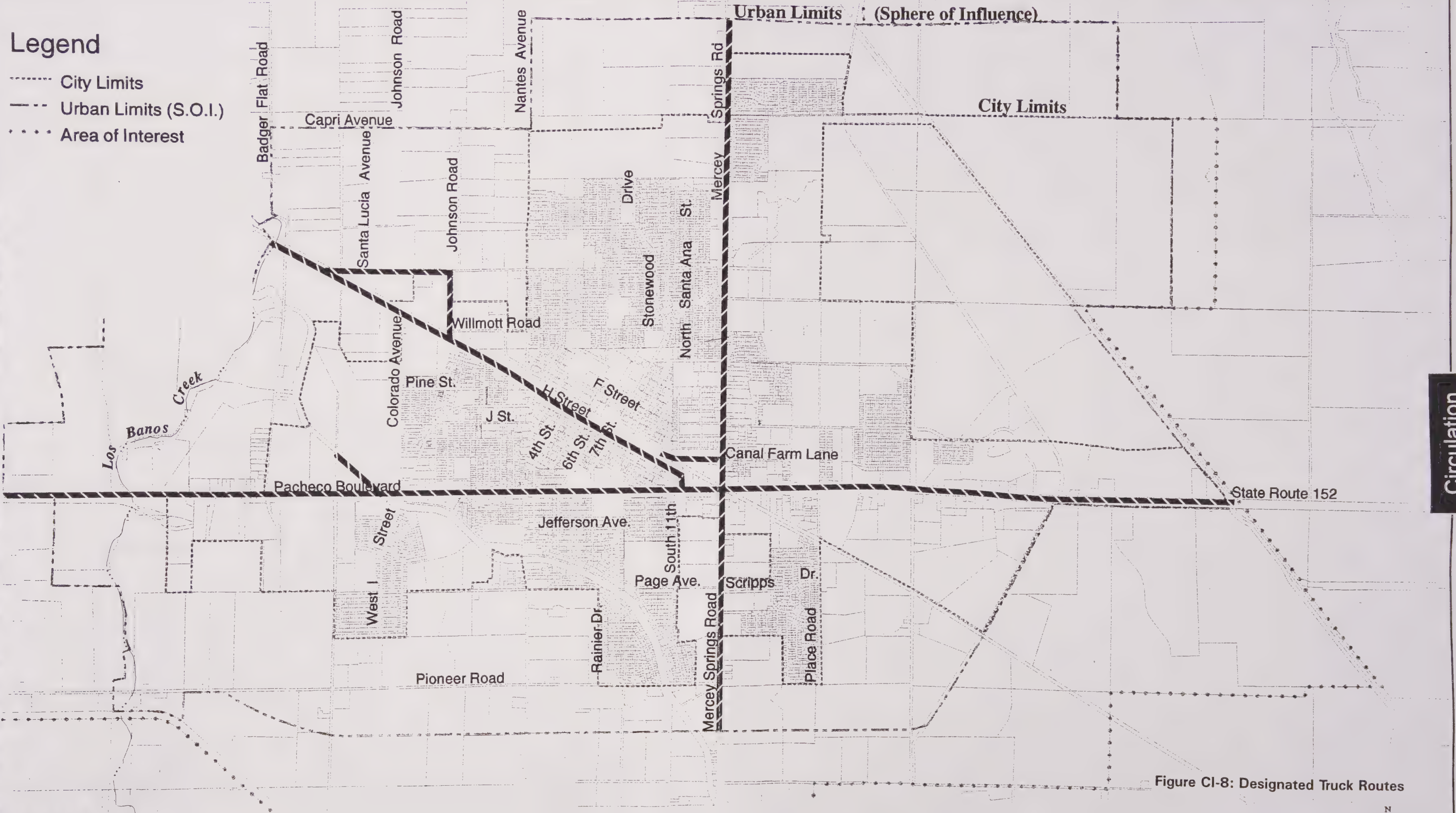


Figure CI-8: Designated Truck Routes





Page CU-15

Table CU-4
Bike Plan Top Five Priorities

1a	Mercey Springs Road - bike lane from Pacheco Boulevard north to Henry Miller Road.
1b	Mercey Springs Road - bike path from Pacheco Boulevard south to Pioneer Road.
2	Page Avenue bike path between Eleventh Street and Scripps.
3a	B Street bikeway - from end of B Street west to San Luis Canal.
3b	B Street bike route from Seventh east across Mercey Springs Road where B Street ends.
4	Build a bike path along the Southern Pacific Railroad (Rail to Trail) tracks from Los Banos Creek to the San Luis Canal.
5	Designate bike lanes on Pacheco Boulevard/Highway 152 from Badger Flat Road to the San Luis Canal.

Increasing bicycle ridership is one way to off-set the reliance on single occupant vehicular travel, a major contributor to the air quality problem in the San Joaquin Valley.

Caltrans recognizes three Classes of bicycle lanes:

- Class I Provides a completely separated right-of-way designated for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with limited crossflow by motor vehicles.

- Class II Provides a restricted right-of-way designated for the exclusive or semi-exclusive use of bicycles with through travel by motor vehicles prohibited, but with vehicle parking and cross flows by pedestrians and motorists permitted.

- Class III Provides a right-of-way designated by signs or permanent markings and shared with pedestrians or motorists.

RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL PLANS

The City of Los Banos supports and participates in the development of the Merced County Regional Transportation Plan, and the policies and programs it contains. Key facilities of the City's Circulation Element support the Regional Plan. Likewise, the Regional Plan supports the City's transportation system in such areas as airports, public transit, bike and pedestrian facilities, and roads of regional significance.

Through its participation in the Merced County Association of Governments, the regional circulation needs of Los Banos are reflected in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program and numerous other state and federal programs. The funding for projects identified in these programs is often sporadic and never guaranteed.

Public Transit

The City of Los Banos provides financial support to and is served by the county-wide consolidated transit service. The transit service provides limited low cost transit service between Los Banos, Santa Nella, Merced, El Nido, Dos Palos, South Dos Palos, and Dos Palos "Y," Monday through Friday. A fixed-route within the City limits also became available in October of 1998. A demand-responsive Dial-a-Ride service is also provided by the transit service. Transportation is also available from Greyhound-Trailways Bus lines which provides scheduled service throughout the valley along Highway 99 and Highway 152.

Airport Facilities

The Los Banos Municipal Airport is included in the National Airport Plan and is classified as a Basic Utility Stage 1 Airport. This class accommodates most general aviation aircraft except large twin engine and jet aircraft which require long reinforced runways. The airport is also included as part of the Merced County Airport Land Use Plan, and the City has adopted a separate Master Plan as a guide to subsequent airport improvements. The City's Airport Master Plan Update was adopted in 1998. The County is in the process of updating their Airport Land Use Master Plan.

Figure LU-1, located in the pocket at the rear of document, shows a conical southeasterly extension of the Airport Approach Zone (dashed line) as designated in the 1978 Update of the Merced County Airport Land Use Compatibility Policy Plan. This zone extends outward to a line perpendicular to and 5,200 feet southeast of the runway.

Only agricultural use of land is proposed in the northwesterly takeoff pattern to keep this area free of hazards to and from aircraft. To the southeast, where some residential and commercial encroachment within the airport Clear Zone has already occurred. The General Plan proposes a restrictive land use plan for this area. See Land Use Element.

GOALS

The goals of the Los Banos Circulation Element are to:

- ☐ **Plan for, create, and maintain an efficient, cost effective, safe, and coordinated multi-modal circulation system, serving the needs of a variety of users.**
- ☐ **Provide a safe, convenient and efficient multi-modal transportation system capable of meeting the needs of the residents of Los Banos within the Urban Development Area and the general public travelling to and through Los Banos.**
- ☐ **Plan for and develop streets in accordance with the ultimate functions they have been designated to serve.**

- ☐ Minimize conflicts between different types of vehicular traffic and to discourage the intrusion of both through traffic and truck traffic into residential areas.
- ☐ Provide adequate off-street parking for all uses.
- ☐ Continue to support the development of inter-city and intra-city transit systems, with special emphasis toward serving the needs of senior citizens, the physically handicapped, and low-income residents.
- ☐ Include the development of bikeways as part of the City's multi-modal transportation system.
- ☐ Provide for safe and efficient pedestrian access within the City.
- ☐ Meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and requirements.

General Circulation

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE CU 1

Establish a circulation system that is consistent with the land use patterns of the City.

POLICY CU 1.1

Establish a hierarchy of streets and improvement standards to support existing and future transportation needs.

Program CU 1.1-A

The Classification of Existing and Future Streets (see Tables CU-2 and CU-3 respectively for classification listing of existing streets, and Figures CU-1 contained in the pocket at the end of this document for future streets) shall be used in determining in right-of-way acquisitions, design and land use decisions.

Program CU 1.1-B

Future street development shall be consistent with the street classifications shown in Table CU-2 and Figure CU-1 contained in the pocket at the end of this document. The City reserves the right to reduce the ultimate right-of-way to avoid existing development, and to construct a travelway which generally meets the street classification standards, by reducing the area provided for landscaping, utilities, parking and other non-travel use.

Program CU 1.1-C (AQ)

The City will encourage property owners in newly developing areas to prepare Master Plans or Specific Plans which identify future major street alignments. The City will participate in the design of street alignments in advance of development to ensure consistent and logical design of the circulation system.

Program CU 1.1-D

For local residential and non-residential streets, incorporation of moderately curved streets, cul-de-sacs, knuckles and "T" intersections in site plans is encouraged. Maximum length of local straight streets should not exceed 1,000 feet.

Program CU 1.1-E

All streets entering upon opposite sides of any given street should have their centerline directly opposite to each other or separated by at least 150 feet. Greater distances may be required on collector and higher classification streets.

POLICY CU 1.2 (AQ)

Coordinate planning and development of the circulation system with development approvals throughout the City.

Program CU 1.2-A

The City shall prepare, adopt and maintain, "Improvement Standards and Specifications" for the development of all street improvements, and to implement the Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs of this Element.

Program CU 1.2-B (AQ)

When new streets are provided at the periphery of a project, minimum construction shall consist of full half-width construction on the side nearest the project plus a minimum of one lane of travel in the opposite direction.

POLICY CU 1.3 (AQ)

Locations of Major Collector street intersections with Arterial streets shall be fixed by the Circulation Map. Roadway dedications and development design shall implement the Circulation Map. Location of Major Collector alignments in newly developing areas shall be logical, efficient, and established early in the development process to aid in the consistent design of subdivisions.

OBJECTIVE CU 2

Provide timely and effective means of programming and constructing street and highway improvements to maintain an overall Level of Service of "C", with a peak hour Level of Service of "D" as defined in the Highway Capacity Manual (published by the Transportation Research Board of the National Research Council) or better unless other public health, safety, or welfare factors determine otherwise.

POLICY CU 2.1

Street improvements identified in the Capital Improvement Program shall be prioritized with emphasis on reducing traffic congestion and improving circulation.

Program CU 2.1-A

Improve intersections operating at less than P.M. peak hour Level of Service "D" conditions by adding appropriate turning lanes to congested approaches, widening intersection approaches, or modifying signal timing at intersections and coordinating with other signals, as appropriate, unless other public health, safety, or welfare factors determine otherwise.

Program CU 2.1-B (AQ)

The City may pursue the reservation of right-of-way and define specific development standards and requirements through the preparation and adoption of Precise Plan Lines.

Program CU 2.1-C

To help ensure that adequate and safe travel-ways can be developed through existing developed areas of the City, right-of-way standards for each classification may be modified.

Program CU 2.1-D (AQ)

Encourage the use of carpooling, vanpooling and flexible employment hours to maintain an acceptable level of service on City streets and highway/interregional facilities.

Program CU 2.1-E (AQ)

Properly space and coordinate traffic signals in order to minimize the acceleration, idling and deceleration that produces higher vehicular emissions levels as part of a Transportation System Management program.

OBJECTIVE CU 3

Provide a cost effective level-of-service at the airport that is compatible with the safety, health, environmental and economic concerns of the community.

POLICY CU 3.0-A.1

Requests for development surrounding the airport shall consider the impact of the development on the airport and the impact of the airport on the development.

Program CU 3.0-A

Residential development within the southeasterly approach zone is to be restricted within a horizontal distance extending approximately 3,000 to 4,000 feet southeast of the end of the runway.

Program CU 3.0-B

The City shall require the dedication of aviation easements as a condition of approving any development within the Airport Approach Zone.

Program CU 3.0-C

The adopted Los Banos Airport Plan shall be considered in land use decisions which may be affected by the Airport Plan with regard to noise, structure height, safety, and other hazards.

Program CU 3.0-D

Incompatible land uses which would diminish the existing operation and the future expansion of the Los Banos Airport shall be prohibited.

Inter-jurisdictional Cooperation

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE CU 4 (AQ)

Achieve a coordinated regional and local transportation system that minimizes traffic congestion and efficiently serves users.

POLICY CU 4.1 (AQ)

Work with Caltrans to identify needed improvements to its highway facilities in the City and implement necessary programs and funding mechanisms to assist in improving Highways 152 and 165, their common intersection, and their intersections with local roadways.

POLICY CU 4.2 (AQ)

Support coordination with other cities, counties and planning agencies concerning consideration and management of land use, jobs/housing balance and transportation planning as a means of improving air quality.

POLICY CU 4.3 (AQ)

Cooperate with local and regional jurisdictions in the preparation of state-mandated regional plans, including the San Joaquin Valley Clean Air Plan.

POLICY CU 4.4 (AQ)

Coordinate local transportation plans with the Merced County Congestion Management Program, when developed, to ensure eligibility for state and federal funding.

POLICY CU 4.5 (AQ)

Continue to support Merced County Council of Governments ride-sharing programs which provide up-to-date lists of potential riders and education of the public on commuting options.

Non-Motorized Transportation

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE CU 5

Promote maximum opportunities for pedestrian traffic throughout the City by continuing to develop and maintain a safe interconnected, and functionally complete sidewalk and pedestrian walkway system which facilitates pedestrian access—including access for disabled persons, and between residential uses, community services, jobs, and public transit facilities.

POLICY CU 5.1 (AQ)

Subdivision layouts should include safe and pleasant designs which promote pedestrian access to arterial and major collector streets, and consider the location of community services, such as schools, parks, disabled persons, and neighborhood shopping activity centers in the accessibility of their design.

Program CU 5.1-A (AQ)

Encourage the use of "day-lighted" cul-de-sacs for residential sidewalk access to Arterial and Collector streets to increase pedestrian access to the Arterial or Collector street.

Program CU 5.1-B (AQ)

Implement street standards that include sidewalk or walkways on both sides of streets, where appropriate. Where existing roads may require additional right-of-way to accommodate full improvements including sidewalks, and where it is impractical to acquire sufficient right-of-way, the vehicle travel-way will be the first priority.

POLICY CU 5.2 (AQ)

Bicycle lanes, where feasible, should be established along Major Collector streets in newly developing areas. A bicycle route system should be identified and maintained which serves the existing developed City. This route system may utilize City streets, canals, stream banks or other right-of-way. Where on-street bicycle lanes are proposed they should be considered a shared facility with vehicular traffic on the street.

Program CU 5.2-A (AQ)

A separately striped Class II bike lane shall be provided along Mercey Springs Road as required by agreement with Caltrans.

Program CL 5.2-B(AQ)

Maintain and implement the Los Banos Commuter Bike Plan as Adopted by the City.

POLICY CU 5.3 (AQ)

Sources of funding for operation and maintenance of multi-use trails accommodating pedestrian and bicycle use shall be clearly identified before construction. Trail systems shall be supported by a long-term maintenance funding mechanism.

Program CU 5.3-A (AQ)

Develop canals, waterways and excess rail road right-of-way as a non-motorized transportation enhancement to promote the walking, cycling and other non-motorized means of transportation.

Public Transportation

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE CU 6 (AQ)

Develop a public transit system capable of satisfying both local and regional travel demand.

POLICY CU 6.1 (AQ)

Recognize the efforts of other social service transit providers including schools, mental health services, and others who provide specialized transit services when planning circulation system components.

Program CU 6.1-A

Continue to refer development requests to the Los Banos Unified School District for review and comment.

Program CU 6.1-B

Continue to refer development requests to the Merced County Regional Transportation Joint Powers Authority for review and comment.

Right-of-way Acquisition

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE CU 7

Acquire the ultimate right-of-way for streets during the earliest stage of development possible. Where existing right-of-way is substandard, acquire additional right-of-way to satisfy ultimate needs.

POLICY CU 7.1

Work with new development to ensure that the pro-rata share of street improvement costs are clearly identified early in the development process, and that street development is consistent with the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Program CU 7.1-A

Ultimate right-of-way shall be dedicated and/or developed to the appropriate width when a zone change to a greater density or intensity, division of property, or when new development or major remodeling occurs.

Program CU 7.1-B

The City shall adopt minimum right-of-way development standards for residential and non-residential developments. Dedication or construction in excess of this minimum level shall be included for funding in the city-wide capital improvement program.

Program CU 7.1-C

The City will include in its Capital Improvement Program the acquisition of right-of-way and the construction or reconstruction of those streets not otherwise obtainable under Program CU 7.1-A.

Program CU 7.1-D

The City will work with Merced County to apply City standards to all land use and development permits issued in the unincorporated territory within the City's Area of Interest boundary.

POLICY CU 7.2

On developed streets, where the existing right-of-way does not meet the current standards, the City will adopt and fund a program to acquire the ultimate right-of-way where practical. The City may apply a lower standard if the ultimate right-of-way is not obtainable due to existing development or other limitations.

Program CU 7.2-A

The City shall establish, and periodically update, a city-wide Capital Improvement Program, that shall identify both funded and unfunded portions of the street improvements necessary to maintain the adopted Level of Service. The Capital Improvement Program shall also identify funding sources including assessment districts, general funds, grants, state subventions, and fees available to implement the program.

Parking

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE CU 8

Provide adequate parking and loading facilities while encouraging alternative means of transportation.

POLICY CU 8.1 (AQ)

Encourage the development of appropriate locations for park-and-ride facilities for commute traffic.

Program CU 8.1-A (AQ)

Sites for stand-alone park-and-ride lots should generally be located near highly traveled commute routes.

Program CU 8.1-B (AQ)

Sites for park-and-ride lots should be encouraged to be incorporated in regional commercial parking areas.

POLICY CU 8.2

The City shall establish off-street parking ratios for all public and private development within the City.

Program CU 8.2-A

Parking standards shall be evaluated for new development to ensure that parking requirements are satisfied within walking distance of the commercial areas, and to ensure that Arterial or higher classification streets do not separate parking facilities from the parking demand generator.

Program CU 8.2-B

Adjacent parking areas for large commercial and professional developments should be designed to allow interconnection and free flow of traffic between those facilities. Access easements and agreements should be obtained during the development process to ensure future access and should be recorded to run with the land.

Program CU 8.2-C

The City should establish off street parking ratios for development within the Central Business District.

Program CU 8.2-D

Where it is infeasible for new development to provide off-street parking within the Downtown District, the City should establish an in-lieu fee with the proceeds utilized to increase parking within the district.

POLICY CU 8.3

The City should investigate the feasibility of locating commercial truck parking facilities at strategic locations in the City where residents' truck and tractor vehicles can be parked over night as a means of keeping City streets clear of these vehicles when the residents are at home.

Circulation Design

Objectives, Policies and Programs

Highways 152 and 165

OBJECTIVE CU-9

Establish policies and programs which define the roles, specify the requirements, and implement the development and improvement of the various functional classification of streets and roads recognized in this General Plan.

POLICY CU 9.1

Provide for adequate spatial separation and landscaping for development along freeway, highway and expressway rights-of-way.

Program CU 9.1-A

Additional landscape design requirements will be considered for new projects along the entryways into the City, specifically Highways 152 and 165. Maintenance of these areas may be included in a Maintenance District established by the City.

Program CU 9.1-B

Future development along the Highways 152 and 165 should consider the noise contours and establish setbacks and noise barriers as appropriate to protect the future operation of the highways and to mitigate the impact of noise on adjacent development.

POLICY CU 9.2

Protect and enhance the efficiency of Pacheco Boulevard (Highway 152) and Mercey Springs Road (Highway 165). Continue to pursue funding and construction approval for the Highway 152 bypass.

Program CU 9.2-A

The City will continue to protect the need for eventual widening of Highway 152 (Pacheco Boulevard) between Highway 165 (Mercey Springs Road) and West "I" Street by imposing setbacks and improvement requirements for projects which require site plan review, parcel maps or final maps.

Program CU 9.2-B

The City will pursue a negotiated agreement with Caltrans to achieve the necessary widening of Highways 152 and 165 under the State Transportation Improvement Plan, STIP. This will also include seeking commitment by the State of appropriate contributions toward the cost of intersection improvement at the intersection of Highways 152 and 165 and other important intersections with these Highways.

Program CU 9.2-C

The City should close or modify selected intersections along Highway 152 as necessary to improve circulation.

Program CU 9.2-D

Develop an East-West parallel system to Highway 152 to take pressure of the Highway 165/152 interchange.

Major and Minor Arterials**POLICY CU 9.3**

The City shall promote an active policy of consolidating driveways, access points and curb cuts along existing developed Arterial or higher classification streets when a zone change to a greater density or intensity, division of property, or new development or a major remodeling occurs.

Program CU 9.3-A

Existing points of ingress and egress shall be consolidated whenever possible. Driveway consolidation for new development shall be encouraged through access agreements along Arterial or higher classification streets.

Program CU 9.3-B

Left-hand turn lanes shall be provided for all left-turn access from arterial or higher classification streets in commercial and industrial areas.

Program CU 9.3-C

If parcel size demands and alternative shared access is not available, commercial driveways may be provided not less than 50 feet from an intersection (measurement shall be from the curb return to the nearest edge of the driveway). These driveways shall not be serviced by median breaks. If more than one is required to serve a property, the driveways shall be separated by 50 feet. (The separation is to be measured nearest edge to nearest edge of the driveways.)

Program CU 9.3-D

The distance between commercial driveways on Arterial streets should not be less than 400 feet. (Measurements shall be from the curb return of the intersection to the nearest edge of the driveway.)

Program CU 9.3-E

Driveway access to major activity centers, including multi-family development, should be located no closer than 200 feet to the intersection of a Major Collector or Arterial street. (Measurements shall be from the curb return of the intersection to the nearest edge of the driveway.)

Program CU 9.3-F

Where practical and desirable, commercial driveways should be located on adjacent Collector streets rather than on Arterial streets.

Program CU 9.3-G

Where there is no adopted design for median breaks on an arterial street, there should be not less than 1,000 feet between median breaks (excluding left turn provisions). Median breaks should be consistent with the standards for driveways (not less than 200 feet from an adjacent intersection of an Arterial or Major Collector street).

Program CU 9.3-H

Single family residential driveways are prohibited on new arterial streets, and shall be discouraged on existing arterial streets.

POLICY CU 9.4

Design of Arterial Streets shall minimize unsignalized intersections where cross traffic is allowed. The number of signals shall be kept to a minimum and shall be spaced to encourage efficient traffic flow.

Program CU 9.4-A (AQ)

Traffic signals should not be closer than one-quarter (1/4) mile apart on arterial and major collector streets unless conditions warrant additional signalization to improve traffic flow. Where traffic conditions or signal spacing warrant, adjacent traffic signals shall be under synchronized control.

Program CU 9.4-B (AQ)

Separation of Minor Collector Street entry points should not be less than 500 feet apart on Arterial streets, Major Collector streets, and other Minor Collector streets. Median standards of 1,000 feet apply to Minor Collector intersections with Arterial streets.

Program CU 9.4-C (AQ)

Major Arterial streets shall be built at an approximate separation of one (1) mile. Major Arterial streets are planned for newly developing areas where acquisition of ultimate right-of-way can be achieved without significant disruption of existing uses. Because of existing right-of-way limitations, Major Arterial streets may connect with Minor Arterial streets employing design modifications.

Program CU 9.4-D (AQ)

Minor Arterial streets shall be on an approximate one (1) mile separation and may be an extension of the Major Arterial streets. The design of the Minor Arterial is constrained by significant right-of-way limitations; however, the roadway must function at arterial traffic levels.

POLICY CU 9.5 (AQ)

Planning and development of Arterial and Major Collector Streets shall include design features which can be used as public transit stops.

Program CU 9.5-A (AQ)

Arterial and Major Collector streets shall be designed to allow transit vehicles to pull out of traffic by using either a continuous parking lane with bus stops, or with special bus pull-out lanes.

POLICY CU 9.6

To avoid conflict between the circulation system and residential uses, it is recommended that truck traffic be oriented only onto the designated Arterial streets.

Program CU 9.6-A

The City shall periodically review the list of streets designated as truck routes, and provide public notification of any changes to the truck route system.

Major and Minor Collectors/Industrial (Local)

POLICY CU 9.7

The City shall promote an active policy of consolidating driveways, access points and curb cuts along existing developed Collector streets when a zone change to a greater density or intensity, division of property, or new development or a major remodeling occurs.

Program CU 9.7-A

Driveways to multi-family residential property along Major Collector streets should be consolidated whenever possible.

Program CU 9.7-B

The distance between driveways and intersecting Minor Collectors or Local streets should not be less than 300 feet. (Measurement shall be from curb return to the nearest edge of the driveway).

Program CU 9.7-C

Left-hand turn lanes shall be provided for access on collector streets in commercial and industrial areas.

Program CU 9.7-D

Single family residential driveways should be prohibited along Major Collector and higher classifications (i.e., arterials), including the provision of no-access strips or deed restrictions limiting access, along residential side or rear yards to these streets.

Program CU 9.7-E

If parcel size demands increased access and alternative shared access is not available, driveways may be provided not less than 50 feet from the intersection (measurement shall be from the curb return to the nearest edge of the driveway). These driveways shall not be serviced by median breaks. If more than one is required to serve a property, the driveways shall be separated by a minimum of 50 feet. (The separation is to be measured nearest edge to nearest edge of the driveways.)

Program CU 9.7-F

Driveway access to major activity centers should be located no closer than 200 feet to the adjacent intersection of a Major Collector or Arterial street. (Measurement shall be from the curb return to the nearest edge of the driveway).

Program CU 9.7-G

The City shall develop a process for the control of access to public streets.

POLICY CU 9.8

Design of Collector Streets shall encourage efficient movement of traffic and minimize uncontrolled cross-traffic.

Program CU 9.8-A

Raised concrete medians may be provided where left turn control is needed, and painted medians may be used at two-way left turn pockets where appropriate. Where concrete medians are provided, median breaks should be spaced not less than 300 feet apart.

Program CU 9.8-B

Where possible, Arterial, Major and Minor Collector streets shall form four-leg, right-angle intersections; jogs, offset and skewed intersections of streets in near proximity shall be avoided.

Program CU 9.8-C

Residential development shall be oriented away (side-on or rear-on) from Arterial and Major Collector streets, and properly buffered so that the traffic carrying capacity on the street will be preserved and the residential environment protected from the potentially adverse characteristics of the street. "Daylighted" cul-de-sacs for pedestrian access are also encouraged.

Program CU 9.8-D

Major Collector streets shall be built at an approximate separation of one (1) mile, typically one-half (1/2) mile from adjacent arterial streets. Major Collector streets are planned for newly developing areas where acquisition of ultimate right-of-way can be achieved without significant disruption of existing uses. Because of existing right-of-way limitations, Major Collector streets may connect with Minor Collector streets employing design modifications.

Program CU 9.8-E

Minor Collector streets may be on less than one (1) mile separation and may be an extension of a Major Collector street, or may be an existing street which connects one part of the City with another. The design of the Minor Collector is constrained by significant right-of-way limitations, however the roadway must function at collector traffic levels.

Program CU 9.8-F

Minor Collector streets are typically constructed in new development areas of the City and their function is to carry a higher traffic capacity than local streets and connect to Major Collectors or occasionally Major Arterial streets.

Program CU 9.8-G

Local non-residential streets shall not intersect with local residential streets.

Local Residential and Private Streets

POLICY CU 9.9

Discourage through-traffic on local streets in residential areas.

Program CU 9.9-A

To keep local street volumes within design capacity, street length should be kept under 1,000 feet unless interrupted by an arterial or collector street. (The overall length of local streets should not exceed 2,600 feet.)

Program CU 9.9-B

If a local street is carrying an unacceptable level of through traffic, the City may implement appropriate means to reduce traffic through creation of one-way traffic flow, installation of traffic diversion devices, and/or any other means deemed to be acceptable.

Program CU 9.9-C (AQ)

Subdivision designs should be encouraged to use "daylighted" cul-de-sacs opening on to Arterial and Collector streets thereby providing enhanced pedestrian access to future public transit system routes.

Program CU 9.9-D

Residential subdivisions shall be designed to encourage access from local to collector streets and discourage use of local streets as an access onto, or bypass of, collector or arterial streets.

Program CU 9.9-E (AQ)

Integrate into the City Improved Standards and Specifications design details for "daylighted" cul-de-sacs which can be jointly used for public transit pick-up locations along Arterial and Collector streets.

Program CU 9.9-F

Alleys in new residential areas shall be discouraged unless part of an overall design theme and development program that includes ongoing maintenance and replacement costs as an integral component of the development.

Program CU 9.9-G

Within the Downtown District, alleys should be maintained to provide for pedestrian corridors and access to off-street parking. The alleys should be fully improved and may contain ornamental paving, landscaping and lighting.

Program CU 9.9-H

New development which uses existing alleys as access shall be required to improve the alley to city standards. Such improvements shall extend in length along the full alley frontage of the property, and extend to the nearest public street. Width of improvements shall encompass full existing and dedicated alley width.

Program CU 9.9-I

A cul-de-sac shall be constructed on all permanent dead-end streets. Cul-de-sacs are discouraged in commercial and industrial developments. Temporary cul-de-sacs may be provided on short stub streets planned for extension, and shall be provided on stub streets planned for extension which provide access to two or more lots on a single side of the stub street. The length of temporary or permanent cul-de-sacs shall not exceed 500 feet as measured from the radius point to the nearest intersection providing two or more routes of ingress and egress.

Program CU 9.9-J

Proposals for private streets and new alleys constructed in conjunction with development shall be required to demonstrate fiscal ability to provide long-term maintenance.

OBJECTIVE CU 10

The circulation system shall be designed to minimize excessive noise impacts on sensitive land uses. New development shall mitigate noise impacts in accordance with the requirements of the noise element.

POLICY CU 10.1

Provide for spatial separation and necessary noise barriers between railroads and residential or other noise sensitive uses.

Program CU 10.1-A

Future development and redevelopment along major transportation corridors shall be required to demonstrate that the project will not be subjected to unacceptable noise levels at full road design capacity.

POLICY CU 10.2

New development shall be required to mitigate traffic impacts associated with the project on the Freeways, Expressways, Major and Minor Arterial Streets, Major and Minor Collector Streets, and Local streets, including signalization, bridges, interchanges, public transit facilities, and other traffic facilities.

Program CU 10.2-A

Traffic studies of affected Freeways, Major and Minor Arterial, Major and Minor Collector, and Local streets, may be required as part of the environmental assessment of proposed projects to assure citywide traffic service levels are maintained. The criteria for requiring traffic studies includes the potential for a significant environmental effects from the project, number of vehicle trips generated by the project, location of project relative to existing circulation system, actual or assumed level-of-service of surrounding streets or intersections, and relevance of prior traffic studies which may have considered the proposed project. Traffic studies shall include level-of-service forecasts to account for individual and cumulative major land use changes in the City. Level-of-service forecasts should be used to identify deficient roadways and update street improvement plans and priorities.

Program CU 10.2-B

Mitigation of traffic impacts may take the form of payment of traffic impact fees. The City of Los Banos shall undertake a development fee impact study which identifies impact fees allocated to new development consistent with Government Code Section 66000 et. seq. and the City's Capital Improvement Program. New development may be required to pay traffic impact fees and/or construct traffic improvements necessary to accommodate new development as proposed.

POLICY CU 10.3 (AQ)

New development shall be responsible for the construction to City Standards of portions of arterial and collector streets that are within such development. New development shall be responsible for a partial street section of any arterial and collector street within such development. A partial street section is defined as curb, gutter, sidewalk, street lights, parking lane and one 12' travel lane along the frontage of any arterial or collector street (shown in Figure CU-3 as S1, S2, P, and L1). The balance of the shall be subject to construction using the City's traffic impact fees (shown in Figure CU-3 as L2 and M).

Program CU 10.3-A (AQ)

If the development of a parcel of land or subdivision requires a greater level of improvements to assure adequate two way traffic on an arterial street or collector street that traverses two properties owned by different persons, and the required improvements creates a wider street that the developer is ordinarily responsible, the first developer shall be entitled to reimbursement for oversizing from the adjoining property owner at the time such property is developed.

At the time of development, the City and the developer shall included in a development agreement or subdivision agreement the appropriate findings and mechanisms for reimbursement, if any from adjoining property owners.

Program CU 10.3-B

In all development where partial width streets are required to be constructed, the developer shall be responsible for constructing a minimum of two traffic lanes. This street construction shall contain frontage improvements (curbs, gutter, sidewalk, street lights, and parking lane) fronting the development, plus two 12 foot travel lanes.

If the construction of the street benefits an adjoining property owner by reducing the actual amount of street construction required by that adjoining property owner at the time of development, or constitutes the responsibility of the City through traffic impact fees in the case of an arterial or collector street, the developer shall be entitled to reimbursement from adjoining property owner or City at time the adjoining property is developed.

At the time of development, the City and the developer shall include in a development agreement or subdivision agreement the appropriate findings and mechanisms for reimbursement, if any from adjoining property owners.

[End of Circulation Element]

OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION & RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

The requirements for the Open Space Element (Government Code Sections 65302[e] and 65560 et. seq.) are similar to those addressed in the Conservation Element (Government Code Section 65302[d]). This element combines these two state-mandated elements, Open Space and Conservation, and adds an optional Recreation component into one comprehensive element.

State law mandates that the open space element address four basic areas of concern: (1) Open space for resource management including agricultural and mineral resources; (2) Open space for outdoor recreation including parks and recreational facilities; (3) Open space for public health and safety including flood prone areas and earthquake fault zones; and, (4) Open space for the preservation of natural resources, including natural plant communities, habitat for fish and wildlife, and water resources. Added to this, the conservation element is required to address issues such as waterways, soils, wildlife preservation, natural and riparian habitats, and scenic, historical and cultural resource conservation. Recreational topics addressed in this element include neighborhood and community parks, and pedestrian and bicycle trails. Much of the important aspects of each of these issues is addressed through Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs elsewhere in the plan. As with other Elements of the General Plan, air quality polices are denoted with an (AQ) following policies or programs. This section groups the discussion items providing an "Overview" to the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation programs of the City. This "Overview" discusses the following topics:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Open Space | ☐ Extractive Resources |
| ☐ Agricultural Lands | ☐ Energy Conservation |
| ☐ Water Resources | ☐ Historical/Cultural Resources |
| ☐ Biological Resources | ☐ Recreation |

OPEN SPACE

Open space, as defined by the Government Code, includes any parcel or area of land or waters which is essentially unimproved and designated for the preservation of natural resources, the production of natural resources, recreation, and public health and safety. This broad definition encompasses parks, storm drainage basins, viewshed setbacks and agricultural land.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Agricultural land is the City's most important resource. In 1994 the County's gross agricultural production value was recorded at \$1.2 Billion. This represents the sixth consecutive year where the gross value of agricultural crops exceeded \$1 Billion. The preservation of agricultural resources is important to the economic vitality of both the City of Los Banos and the region. Additionally, agriculture and its associated open space are essential to preserving regional heritage and contributes to the quality of life for the residents of Merced County. The City of Los Banos considers agriculture an industry, and therefore it is a vital constituent of the economic base of the City. Just as the City desires to retain and expand its existing manufacturing, warehousing, and processing industrial base; it desires to retain and expand the agricultural industrial base in areas outside its Urban Limit Line, and prevent premature loss of this economic base within the Urban Limit Line.

Merced County does not participate in the Williamson Act (California Land Conservation Act of 1965). Preservation of farmland is considered a local issue and managed by planning at the County and City levels.

Farmland Protection Concept

The City believes that agriculture is an "industry" in the true sense of the word. This industry is important to the livelihood of Los Banos and, similar to other industries, needs protection from encroachment by incompatible land uses. Since this industrial use is existing, new urban uses must demonstrate that they will not have a significant impact on the existing agricultural use. This is especially important for residential uses adjacent to agriculture.

In order to provide a clear policy framework for the protection of this important industry around Los Banos, the City has developed a two-tiered approach to land use: *Avoid and Buffer*.

Avoid

The City intends to avoid the designation/rezoning of residential uses for land sharing a boundary with an existing agricultural use or designation outside of the area intended for urban growth. Acceptable land uses adjacent to agriculture include:

- ☐ Industrial/commercial uses;
- ☐ Physical barriers (e.g., freeways, creeks, canals); and
- ☐ Public uses such as wastewater and water treatment facilities, airports and regional parks.

Within the area designated for urban growth, proposed residential designations/rezoning that share a boundary with existing agricultural uses shall demonstrate that adequate buffer can be provided.

Buffer

When it is not possible to avoid the designation/rezoning of residential uses of land sharing a boundary with existing agricultural uses, it shall be the responsibility of the proposed residential use to demonstrate:

- ☐ That the proposed use will not conflict with normal agricultural practices as allowed in the agricultural zoning of the property; and
- ☐ That a sufficient physical buffer can be provided, on or adjacent to the proposed residential land, to ensure that agricultural practices can continue, without substantial modification, to accommodate the new use. The buffer can include additional setbacks, walls, roads, canals or other similar structures that prohibit pedestrian access between residential and agricultural use, and increase the separation to allow continued agricultural use of the property; and
- ☐ That there is a funding mechanism that will fully maintain the buffer between the residential and agricultural use.

Implicit in the buffer concept is that there will be two levels of buffer, one for inside, and the other for outside of the Urban Limit Line. Land inside the Urban Limit Line which is targeted for urban use should have a temporary buffer since the land may have an agricultural use, but be designated for future development. Policies for land that is designated and used for agriculture, both inside and outside of the urbanized area, should be more restrictive.

Initially, the *avoidance* and *buffer* provisions of the policy would have the most impact on new development. Given the amount of land already within the City Limits, and the small amount of land to the north and east that actually could be developed given the substantial environmental problems, this policy probably would not affect new projects for 5 to 10 years.

WATER RESOURCES

The City of Los Banos is located in the San Joaquin Hydrologic Sub-basin as defined by the California Department of Water resources (CDWR). Encompassing the northern portion of the San Joaquin Valley and adjacent mountain slopes, most water enters the San Joaquin Hydrologic Sub-basin by way of river beds throughout the Valley.

Los Banos' underlying geology is comprised of alluvial deposits. Such deposits form highly productive groundwater aquifers which store vast quantities of water. The San Joaquin Basin has an estimated usable storage capacity of 24.4 million acre feet of water, and approximately 1.5 million acre feet of this is used each year.

A significant feature of the groundwater in the Los Banos area is a confining bed of soil about 100 feet thick known as the Corcoran Clay, or E-Clay. The E-Clay effectively divides the water bearing strata into two aquifers. The upper aquifer extends to a depth ranging from 200 to 300 feet below the surface at Los Banos. The lower aquifer is defined by water bearing strata below the E-Clay layer. This layer is located approximately 300 feet below the ground surface in the Los Banos area, domestic

groundwater in Los Banos is pumped from this upper aquifer. Coarse grained gravelly deposits provide the best supply of water for the City of Los Banos. These deposits are associated with the ancestral San Luis Creek bed which appears to have flowed northeasterly through the Area of Interest. Ground water flow appears to be in this direction as well with the major recharge contributors being the Los Banos Reservoir, Los Banos Creek, and to a lesser degree canal seepage and deep percolation of excess irrigation water south and west of the City.

Except for the urban depression cone caused by City pumping, water levels have remained relatively constant. The exception is south of the City, where reliance on surface water irrigation as opposed to agricultural pumping in this up-gradient area, has allowed groundwater levels to rise averaging to within five to 10 feet of the surface.

Historically, the most productive water yield is to the east of the City. However, the best quality water is found to the south and west. Test wells below the E-Clay layer west of the City, however, have produced water high in manganese and iron content which diminishes water quality. These results suggest that new wells should be developed in the south and southwest parts of the Area of Interest. Although there appears to be a good supply of groundwater in this area, in order for the City to implement the Land Use Plan without significant effect on the groundwater supply, alternative water supply sources must be developed. One of the most readily available supply sources is surface water which can be supplied by local canal and irrigation districts. This potential source of domestic water should be seriously evaluated in the near future, and a plan developed to create storage and treatment facilities to accommodate the demand from new urban growth.

Agricultural wells are a major user of groundwater during dry years or when surface water irrigation supplies are not available. Development of a number of high production agricultural wells near the City for agricultural irrigation purposes could endanger the City's water supply. Some agricultural areas in the County, including smaller irrigation districts rely completely on groundwater supplies in dry years. Surface water allocations to these districts and maintaining water rights for property owners within those districts is a critical issue to the City in order to maintain adequate water supply to serve the projected land use development within the Urban Limit Line.

As a result of AB 3030 which became law January 1, 1993, irrigation and water districts in the State of California may prepare and adopt groundwater management programs covering their jurisdictions. A groundwater management program can be developed which establishes expansive controls on groundwater production, use, recharge, and financing improvements. The City may be significantly impacted by provisions of a groundwater management program and, therefore, should become an active participant in the development of any groundwater management plan which could effect groundwater supply or surface water within the Area of Interest.

Groundwater Recharge

Although groundwater recharge is a primary concern, use of surface water in ponding basins as a recharge source may not be practical due to fine-grained deposits that overlie the permeable, coarse-grained strata of the upper aquifer. Deep injection wells within the urban cone of depression are an alternative, but represent substantial cost in construction, water pre-treatment, and operation and maintenance.

The course of Los Banos Creek and Los Banos Reservoir represent the historic recharge area for the City and those areas should be protected and water supply maintained and enhanced if possible. In cooperation with CCID, the city has embarked on a groundwater recharge program using Stockton Pond as the point of recharge. Stockton Pond already exists and as such provides an immediate opportunity to begin a groundwater recharge program. A recent study¹ determined that the area most favorable for groundwater recharge lays east Los Banos Creek and generally south of Highway 152. If substantial recharge is initiated, close monitoring of groundwater levels and potential sources of pollution need to be undertaken by the City. Groundwater recharge should be considered a long-term benefit to the City's domestic water supply.

Along with efforts to recharge the groundwater table, water conservation measures to minimize domestic well pumping and adequate spacing of new wells could help maintain drawdowns due to urban demand. Such conservation measures are part of the City's on-going utility management program.

Water Quality

The City of Los Banos domestic water supply is considered "fair to good" quality. The 1993 Water Quality Report provided for the California Department of Health Services indicates that Los Banos currently meets or exceeds all minimum requirements for health-related and aesthetic standards set by that agency.

Water Suppliers

State planning law requires that general plan conservation elements address water resources in coordination with all water providers within the jurisdiction for which the general plan is prepared. Therefore, descriptions of agricultural water providers are included below. A clear distinction exists between water service provided by the City for domestic use and water provided by local water districts for agricultural use.

Domestic Water

Domestic water in the Los Banos area is provided by the City of Los Banos. The City of Los Banos and surrounding urban areas draw local groundwater to meet all domestic, commercial, and industrial water demands.

¹ Update on Groundwater Conditions in the Vicinity of the City of Los Banos, Kenneth D. Schmidt and Associates, July 1998.

Guidelines for the management of the Los Banos water system are presented in the Los Banos Municipal Code, chapter seven of title six. This chapter of the Municipal Code establishes specific guidelines for the provision of water services, billing and service charges, and defines unlawful acts regarding the wasting of water.

Agricultural Irrigation Water

Agricultural irrigation water is provided in the vicinity of Los Banos by CCID. Approximately 55 percent of the agricultural water demand in the Los Banos area is met from groundwater withdrawals.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Native vegetation and wildlife resources have recreational, economic, educational, and aesthetic values for the entire community. The economic impact of these resources is substantial amounting to several millions of dollars each year to the local economy. The City recognizes this benefit as an essential partner in the overall economic diversity of the community. As the City grows, the need for preservation of the valuable diversity of species in the area will become increasingly important.

Current data, available from the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Diversity Database, and groups such as the Grassland Resource Conservation District and Grasslands Water District provides an insight into the sensitive biological resources that have potential for occurring in the Los Banos Planning area. These resources include sensitive plant/wildlife communities, jurisdictional wetlands, wildlife species, and plant species.

Plant & Wildlife Communities

Portions of the Los Banos Area of Interest are within the "Grasslands" of western Merced County. According to *Land Use Impacts and Habitat Preservation in the Grasslands of Western Merced County*:

"Land ownership within the Grasslands Study Area is varied, consisting of federal, state, and private entities. Habitat types also are diverse including semipermanent and seasonal wetlands, vernal pools, riparian corridors, native grasslands, and developed agricultural lands. Published reports provide variable estimates of wetland habitats. Merced Data Special Services, Inc. (1993) provided an estimate of 116,509 acres of wetland habitat in the study area. Other estimates, including those from the San Joaquin Valley Drainage Program include areas of seasonal and permanent wetlands. These estimates sum to 91,465 acres..."

Lands under public control comprise over 80,300 acres of seasonal and permanent wetland habitat to the east and north of Los Banos Area of Interest. Included in the public lands are Grasslands Water District, San Luis, and Merced National Wildlife Refuges, and the Volta and Los Banos State Wildlife Management Areas. Private Duck

Clubs account for the remaining 11,144 acres of wetland. Seasonal wetlands are estimated at 83,944 acres and permanent wetlands at 7,521 acres. Figure OCR-1 shows the extent of the Grasslands in Merced County and proximity to Los Banos.

The Los Banos Planning Area is located on the edge of the central San Joaquin Basin. According to the Merced County General Plan this basin "is also part of the Pacific Flyway and an important concentration area for ducks early in the fall.... The flyway extends from western Canada through the western United States to Mexico," and is the subject of an international treaty. A major portion of the winter and summer migration is through the Central Valley. By one estimate the wetlands are used by 30 percent of the Pacific Flyway wintering duck population, and by 50-90 percent of the Pacific Flyway

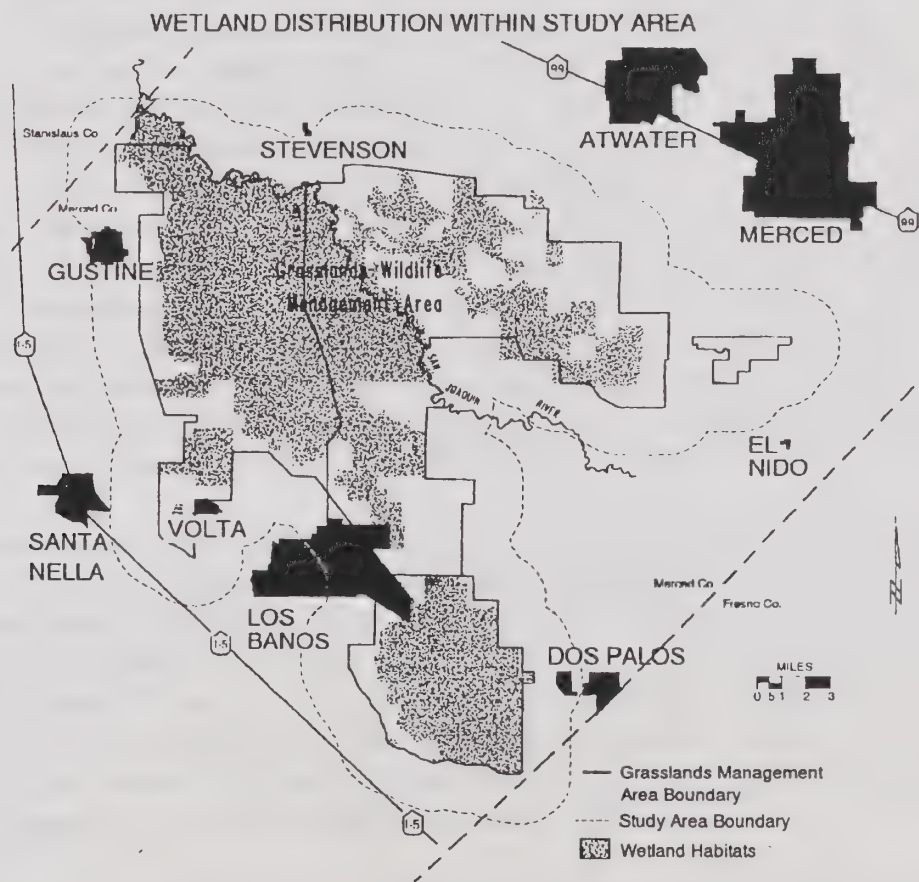


Figure OCR-1 - Wetland Distribution

populations of some species of ducks and geese. Other birds using the "Grasslands" include shorebirds and waterfowl, as well as raptorial species. In a more current report, *Land Use Impacts and Habitat Preservation in the Grasslands of Western Merced County*, the importance of the grasslands to the Pacific Flyway was stated "the Central Valley is of foremost importance for migratory and wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, and other waterbirds. Although the Central Valley composes only 11% of the land area of the state, the area consistently supports 60% of the total wintering waterfowl population of the Pacific Flyway".

Vernal pools have been documented in the California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Databank for Merced County, and some may have existed in areas that have been destroyed beyond recovery by agricultural cultivation. Vernal pools often contain sensitive invertebrates and plant species. A number of wildlife and plant species that inhabit vernal pools are listed or are currently proposed for listing as threatened or endangered.

Other sensitive wetland habitats such as marshes, sloughs, seasonal wetlands, alkali playas, etc., may be present within the Los Banos Planning Area and subject to Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

A great deal of the Los Banos Planning Area has been disturbed by urban and agricultural development. Isolated pockets of land remain today which can be considered in "the natural state." There are remnants of isolated habitats along the edges of agricultural fields and potentially some jurisdictional wetlands remaining. Some areas of *Valley sink scrub* habitat remain on the eastern side of the Planning Area which should be carefully monitored for the effects of development. There are areas of freshwater channel vegetation associated with slough remnants and man made irrigation channels in the Planning Area. Typically, man made channels are maintained in such a manner that the habitat is minimal. Nevertheless, some lands in the Planning Area, particularly those east of the Santa Fe Grade, are functional wetlands providing important habitat for native plants and animals. Because these wetlands are contiguous with extensive wetlands to the north and south, they provide regionally important linkages through which many terrestrial vertebrates can move.

On the eastern margins of the Planning Area, several Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) prepared for development projects noted the existence of habitat for the federally listed threatened species Giant Garter Snake (*Thamnophis couchii gigas*). This habitat exists along the San Luis and Arroyo Canals near the eastern boundaries of the Planning Area. These project EIRs also listed possible habitats for other endangered or threatened species which will require continued study on a project by project basis. Less habitat is present on the west and south of the Planning Area where agricultural operations have continually been in operation.

Studies prepared by the Grasslands Water District discusses the potential existence of the Giant Garter Snake and San Joaquin Kit Fox. In *Land Use Impacts and Habitat Preservation in the Grasslands of Western Merced County*, ten species identified a potentially present in the grasslands are listed as endangered by federal assessment and another five species by the state.

Sensitive Biotic Species

Several plant and animal species known to occur in the Los Banos area have been given special status under federal or state endangered species legislation or otherwise have been designated as "rare," "threatened," "endangered" or "species of special concern."

Federally-listed threatened and endangered species and their habitats are protected under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act. Activities which may "take" actively or potentially used habitat are regulated by the Endangered Species Office of the United States, Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Candidate species on List 1 and 2 also receive special attention from federal agencies during environmental review. Taxa for which the USFWS has sufficient biological information to support a proposal to list as Endangered or Threatened are placed in Category 1. Taxa, the listing of which may be warranted according to existing information, but for which substantial biological information to support a proposed rule is lacking, are placed in Category 2. Some candidate species have been petitioned for federal listing. These species are often treated by resource agencies as if they are actually listed during the environmental review process. Most birds and their active nests are protected by the Federal Migratory Bird Act.

Some listed threatened and endangered species and their habitats are protected under the provisions of California's Endangered Species Act. Activities which may "take" individuals and actively or potentially used habitat may be regulated by the California Department of Fish and Game. The Department of Fish and Game has also produced three lists of "species of special concern." These lists serve as watch lists. Species lists either are of limited distribution or the extent of their habitats has been reduced substantially, such that a threat to their populations may be imminent. As such, their populations should be monitored. These species may receive special attention during environmental review, but do not have statutory protection. Similarly, vascular plants listed as rare or endangered by the California Native Plant Society, which have no designated status under the state endangered species legislation, may also receive special attention during environmental review.

Special status plant and animal species that are known to occur or could potentially occur within the Planning Area are: Hoovers wooley-star (*Eriastrum hoovi*); Hoover's spurge (*Chamaesyce hooveri*); giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*); American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*); San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*); Fresno kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys nitratoideus exilis*); giant kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys ingens*); valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*); vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*); California linderiella (*Linderiella occidentalis*); blunt-nosed leopard lizard (*Gambelia silus*); and the Aleutian Canada goose (*Branta canadensis leucopareia*).

Shared Uses of Groundwater Recharge Basins

The City and CCID have initiated a cooperative effort to recharge groundwater in Stockton Pit. Expansion of the pond may increase groundwater recharge, but also provide an opportunity to develop additional biotic habitat in the area. The City is interested in the potential to create a conjunctive use of the groundwater recharge area and habitat enhancement, if the potential exists to the mutual benefit of both uses. The City may consider creating a habitat area that could be used for wetland or habitat mitigation for development within the City or surrounding areas.

EXTRACTIVE RESOURCES

Resource extraction involves the removal of natural resources from their place of discovery. Sand and gravel for road and building construction are the most significant mineral commodities found within the Los Banos Planning Area. Quarry operations in the Los Banos Creek have yielded millions of tons of building materials for projects in Merced County and beyond. Sand and gravel extraction represents a major economic resource for the Planning Area. Currently, there are four permits issued by Merced County for surface mining approximately 375 acres along Los Banos Creek, west of the Planning Area. Of the four permits issued, two surface mining operations are active, one is inactive, and one operation has been abandoned.

Although subsurface exploration has occurred within the Planning Area, deposits of natural gas and oil have not been developed. Because of the proprietary nature of the exploration results, no estimate of the value or productivity of those potential resources can be made at this time.

ENERGY CONSERVATION

The goal of energy conservation is to reduce the use of depletable or nonrenewable energy resources. Reduced consumption may be achieved either by the more efficient use of these resources, or by replacing them with renewable or non-depletable resources.

Energy is either renewable or non-renewable. Renewable resources are those whose supply is unlimited or can be replenished. This includes solar and wind energy, and, if properly managed, hydroelectric and geothermal power. Nonrenewable resources are those which are limited in supply and which may eventually be depleted. These energy resources include water, oil, and gas. At present, most energy consumed is nonrenewable.

According to the 1992-1993 *California Energy Plan* prepared by the California Energy Commission, over 90 percent of the energy consumed in California in 1991 originated from fossil fuels. Transportation accounted for approximately 50 percent and industrial uses comprised approximately 30 percent of all energy consumed. Residential use of energy was limited to approximately 12 percent of the total energy consumed. The remaining eight percent is consumed by various sources including agriculture.

Vegetation can help with conservation of energy by lowering ambient temperatures of structures and parking lots. Reducing ambient temperatures of buildings could reduce air conditioning requirements. Vegetation can also be used to protect buildings from the cooling effects of winter winds.

There are four general options the City of Los Banos may utilize to encourage energy conservation. First, the City can influence land use and infrastructure patterns. Second, the City can provide educational material for energy conservation. Third, the City can provide incentives to encourage energy conservation. Finally, the City can adopt

regulations requiring energy conservation. Regulations can take a variety of forms and reflect varying degrees of stringency.

HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

The City of Los Banos contains many physical links with its historic past. Historic sites, buildings and objects are reminders of the City's unique heritage and its place in the development of the Central Valley and the State.

Historic Preservation

Historic preservation is the identification and protection of these sites and structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, or cultural significance. Historical sites and landmarks are unique reminders of the social, economic and political history of an area and their preservation includes many benefits. The preservation of cultural resources is the preserving of tangible presence of the past. The economic benefits of historic preservation are many: (1) tourism; (2) an increase in rental and resale value of property; (3) lower replacement costs by recycling older buildings; and (4) increased tax revenues. Historic preservation can also be considered as a reinvestment in a neighborhood to stop its decline and reverse its downward spiral. The reuse of vacant or abandoned buildings and the reuse of existing infrastructure has evolved into a viable approach to revitalizing neighborhoods.

Historical Landmarks

Historic landmarks are buildings or other structures which are significant due to their style of architecture, their builders or inhabitants, their age, or other culturally unique features that they may exhibit. Los Banos is in the hub of an area which has been influential in central California since the mid 1800's and as a result has a number of potentially historic landmarks.

Los Banos Creek, southwest of the City, was visited as early as 1805 by Spanish explorers. It was a favorite stopping point for padres from San Juan Bautista Mission during their travels to the San Joaquin Valley. The Bank of Los Banos Building is a historically significant structure in Los Banos and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The City itself is noted as historic by the Office of Historical Preservation of the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Los Banos was founded in 1889 by Henry Miller, who is credited with farsighted planning and development in the 1870's to create a vast gravity irrigation system. This system is believed to have provided the basis for the area's significant agricultural stability and wealth.

The Canal Farm Inn is also a very significant spot in Los Banos. In 1873, the Headquarters for Miller's Los Banos Division was located at Canal Farm. An Inn was constructed on the foundation of the old ranch superintendent's residence in 1932. This original residence was built on the ruins of the 1873 ranch house of Henry Miller.

Archaeological Sites

Archaeological sites can yield information about the historic and prehistoric activities of man, evidence of earlier cultures that once inhabited an area, and sites having spiritual or cultural significance to Native Americans. These sites, unlike other types of historic resources, are not publicized due to the potential for vandalism. Archaeologists recommend that such sites be left untouched until competent, professional research can be done. The location of these sites are filed with the appropriate local archaeological society or institution, and revealed only to qualified researchers or when projects may threaten the integrity of a site.

According to the Central California Information Center at California State University, Stanislaus, there are thirteen recorded archaeological sites in the Los Banos USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle. Features of these sites include: prehistoric villages; occupational sites containing tools and milling equipment; burial grounds; and human skull fragments. Since 1979, there have been eleven archaeological investigations in the area. These sites are associated with Los Banos Creek and historic marsh lands toward the east of the Planning Area. Given these site discoveries, there is a possibility that additional archaeological resources may be present within the Planning Area.

Systematic archaeological surveys have not been conducted over the entire Los Banos Planning Area. Therefore, it is not possible to predict where sites may be located, or to determine the archaeological sensitivity of any specific property. A standard condition of environmental review or development permit, is that if potential archaeological sites are discovered, all work on the project shall be stopped immediately, and a qualified archaeologist retained to evaluate the site and prepare a report. Only after the site has been evaluated, and appropriate agencies have made findings and recommendations, will work be allowed to continue.

RECREATION

Meeting the recreational needs of the current and projected population of the Los Banos area is a responsibility of both the public and private sectors. The public sector, City, County, and schools typically address recreational needs through public parks and playgrounds with their various facilities (e.g., play equipment, ball fields and courts, swimming pools, passive play and picnic areas), and through a variety of organized recreational programs, instructional programs and special events conducted at neighborhood and community centers. The Los Banos Park and Recreation Commission was established to fulfill the planning and oversight role in providing for the recreation needs of the overall community. The City's Parks and Recreation Department has the basic responsibility of carrying out recreation activities in the City. The School District cooperates with the City in carrying out basic recreation activities. The City's Park and Recreation Department is the lead agency in providing park and recreation activities within the City.

The private sector addresses recreational demand through the development of bowling alleys, roller skating rinks, movie theaters, private recreation and swimming pool

associations, arcade centers and a variety of other businesses serving the leisure demand. The demand for major land intensive recreation activities, such as golf courses, could be addressed by either the public or private sector. Development of private golf courses are typically associated with integral housing development projects. These "country club" type projects usually demand higher land and housing development costs to off-set the golf course construction costs. Few new publicly funded and operated golf courses have been developed in the past 10 years. Those that have been developed have relied on publicly supported bond funds as the primary financial resource. Diminishing fiscal opportunities for most cities has constrained discussion of public financing for golf course development.

Park Facility Standards

Standards provide a means of measurement for the allocation of recreational space and facilities for people in a given area. Standards can also be used to determine whether an existing developed area has an excess, or a deficiency of, recreational space and/or facilities. Finally, standards can be used to establish programs to help make improvements and better meet the recreational needs of the community. Size standards are goals and not requirements. Smaller areas of land may serve different functions depending on location and surrounding development. The following general standards define the various park types for the City.

Playlots

A playlot is a small area intended for children up to six or seven years of age. It is essentially a substitute for the backyard and thus normally provided only in high density areas. Playlots range from 2,500 to 12,500 square feet, and typically are improved with play apparatus, paved areas for wheeled toys, benches, sand areas, or a small wading or spray pool, and landscape treatment. Since these playlots serve an important neighborhood function, they should be located near the centers of high density areas and away from major streets to promote the safety of children. Playlot should be developed and maintained by private development. Only rarely will the City consider developing playlots in conjunction with its normal parks and recreation program. The City would consider such facilities on an as needed basis, but does not encourage such facilities because of the high maintenance expense and difficulty in monitoring activities in those facilities.

Pocket Parks

Pocket Park - 0.25 to 2 acres

Pocket parks are most often found in residential neighborhoods and can be a single or several lots which are developed as an open space amenity to serve the immediate neighborhood. As shown in Figure OCR-2, pocket parks can be linear parks which separate the ends of cul-de-sacs and offer pedestrian walkways to other parts of the neighborhood. In protected locations, pocket parks can be developed as passive or

active areas including playlot characteristics. Usually the pocket park is fully landscaped with trees and turf area. Lighting is provided by surrounding street lights.

Pocket parks can also be found in the Downtown District through use of vacant commercial lots with access from the commercial street through to the adjacent street or alley. Pocket parks can serve the needs of shoppers or employees as places to rest or eat in the Downtown District, or provide access to adjacent commercial streets or parking areas, or simply provide open space texture to an otherwise commercial storefront block.

The City would consider such facilities if they were proposed as part of a Planned Development and were considered an integral element of the project's design. Typically the City would not encourage such facilities because of the high maintenance expense and difficulty in monitoring activities in those facilities. If such facilities were constructed as part of a Planned Development, a legally established maintenance district would be required to provide funds for maintaining the facility.

Neighborhood Park - 2 to 9 acres

Neighborhood Parks, as shown in Figure OCR-3, are designed to meet local "neighborhood" needs, and are intended to be within walking or bicycling distance of one-half (1/2) mile (centroid) from the residence served by the park. A Neighborhood Park service area should avoid crossing any major natural or manmade barriers (i.e., railroads, waterways, major roadways such as arterials) that inhibit access to the park. Based on this one-half (1/2) mile standard and an assumed density of 4 units per gross acre and a household size of 3.1 persons, the service area would potentially contain slightly less than 7,940 people.

Neighborhood Parks usually emphasize child oriented facilities, providing a variety of play spaces and associated amenities. Suggested elements for Neighborhood Parks include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Children's Creative Play Area | ☐ Group Picnic Area |
| ☐ Multiple Use Game Courts | ☐ Lighting for safety only |
| ☐ without night lighting | ☐ Individual Picnic Areas |
| ☐ Open Turf Areas | ☐ without Bar-B-Q area |

Within the City of Los Banos, many of the existing parks are located adjacent to elementary schools, providing a greater range of activities at one site. The size of the park and the type of facilities incorporated within the park site should reflect the needs and characteristics of the current and projected population.

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Figure OCR-2: Typical Pocket Park

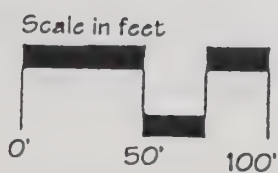
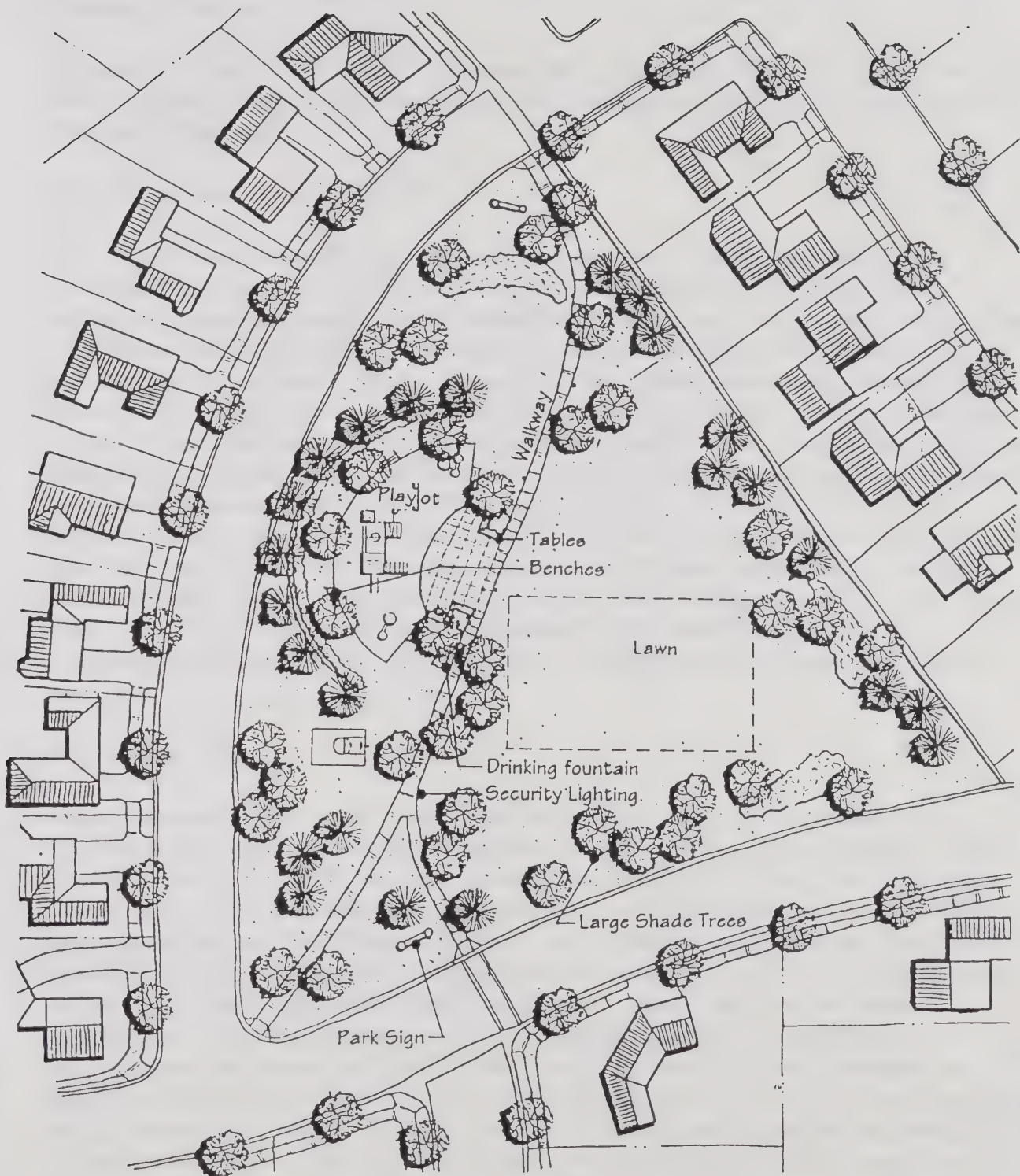


Figure OCR-3: Typical Neighborhood Park

Community Parks

Community Parks in the City of Los Banos may be considered as "minor community parks" or "major community parks" depending on size, location, and type of activities planned for the facility.

Minor Community - 9 to 15 acres.

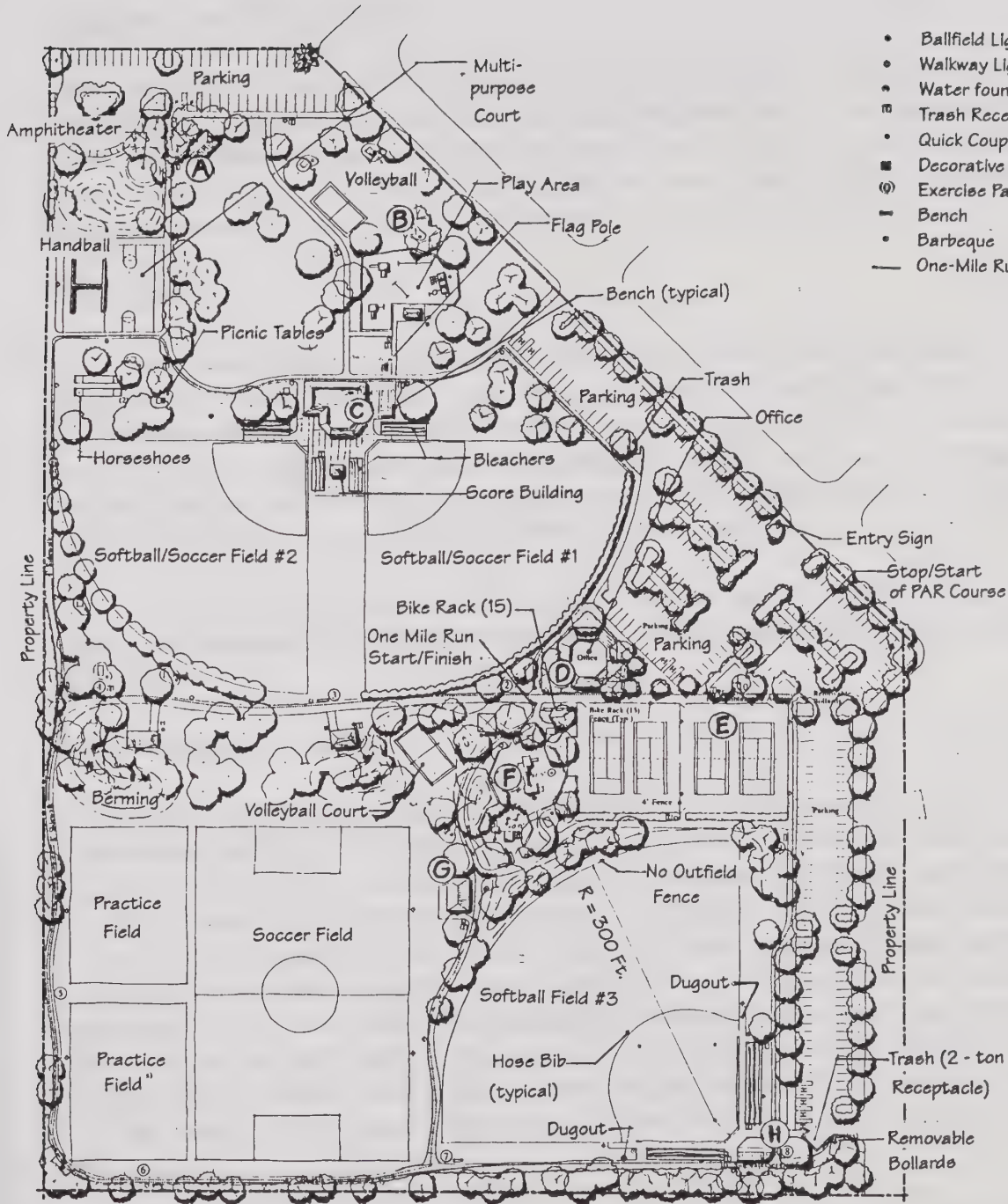
Minor Community Parks typically serve a group of neighborhoods which may be separated by major transportation facilities from the balance of the City, or be developed to serve a specific set of recreational needs such as baseball, softball, hard court areas, swimming pools, or recreation center or special activity centers such as performing arts theaters. Patrons of these facilities can be expected to drive to the parks which requires adequate parking areas and access from arterial and collector streets. Location of these parks should avoid the need to travel through neighborhoods, adding traffic to local streets. Since these special facilities will be developed to allow for more intensive use, these parks may have night lighting, and have recreational activities at night with attendant noise from spectators or public address systems. Care must be taken when siting Minor Community Parks to avoid conflict with nearby residential uses. Minor Community Parks are generally between 3 and 15 acres in size. Minor Community Parks can also be developed as joint-use facilities able to accommodate seasonal storm drainage basins, water wells and noise attenuation measures.

Major Community Park - 15 plus acres.

Major Community Parks serve a group of neighborhoods, generally three to five neighborhoods, within a two mile radius service area. Since patrons typically drive to use community parks, they should be easily accessible from arterial and collector streets and provide safe and adequate parking as well as ingress and egress which does not reduce the level-of-service of the major streets serving the park. Major Community Parks supplement the neighborhood parks by providing for activities that require more space, special facilities, and allow for more intensive use. Major Community Parks may also serve as the neighborhood park for the immediate neighborhood. As shown in Figure OCR-4, Major Community Park amenities are oriented to both adults and children, often providing specialized facilities such as tennis courts, community centers, swimming pools, and sports fields such as baseball, softball and soccer. Because of these intensive uses, Major Community Parks may have night lighting, and have recreational activities at night with attendant noise from spectators or public address systems. Care in siting Major Community Parks is necessary to avoid conflict with nearby residential uses. Major Community Parks are generally between 15 and 50 acres. Major Community Parks can also be developed as joint-use facilities able to accommodate seasonal storm drainage basins, water wells and noise attenuation measures.

LEGEND

- Ballfield Light
- Walkway Light
- Water fountain
- Trash Receptacle
- Quick Coupler
- Decorative paving (optional)
- ⊙ Exercise Par Course
- Bench
- Barbeque
- One-Mile Run



A. Shelter (Typ.)

- .Covered Shelter
- .Picnic Tables
- .BBQ
- .Trash Receptacle
- .Lighting
- .Hose Bib

B. Picnic Area

- .Picnic Table
- .BBQ
- .Concrete Pad

C. Recreation Center

- .Meeting Room
- .Kitchen
- .Restroom
- .Storage
- .Patio/Arbor

D. Office/Shop/Meeting Center

- .Offices
- .Maintenance Shop
- .Meeting Area
- .Restrooms
- .Lobby

G. Storage Building/Restroom

- .Equipment Storage
- .Sports Equipment
- .Restrooms

H. Scorers Building

- .Scorekeeper
- .Restrooms
- .Concessions



Figure OCR-4: Typical Community Park

Regional Park - 50 plus acres

Regional parks or recreational areas are designed to serve an entire community or district and are usually over 50 acres in size. Regional parks may be large natural or preservation areas along waterways, adjacent to waterbodies or scenic areas preserved for the use by the general public. Regional parks fulfill a special need in that they offer a relaxing environment for family and group activities.

Open Space

An open space area is typically a large undeveloped area intended to serve as a greenbelt, or visual break to development, or to address public health and safety needs (i.e, noise sensitive areas). Open space can also be used to protect an environmental resource, yet provide those types of recreational uses which do not substantially alter or destroy the natural environment. Low intensity recreational uses such as walking and bicycling are often compatible with open space areas.

Open space can often be designed to serve dual purposes such as noise buffers, water recharge and storm drainage. Land designated as Open Space may also be actively farmed.

Linear Parks and Trails

Linear parks, especially trails, relate more to transportation and circulation for pedestrians and bicycles than to open space in the City's General Plan. These facilities fill an important role in expanding the opportunities for alternative transportation within the City. These systems often include natural or man-made linear sources such as creeks or canals, utility right-of-ways or service roads. Several existing watercourses and abandoned railroad right-of-way traversing the City could provide excellent opportunities for trail systems and expand access for pedestrians and bicycles in the City. With appropriate design, particularly in the downtown area, activity nodes can be created where events such as street fairs and public events can be held. Linear trails may be used to buffer noise sources, or soften the impact of a wall or other utilitarian feature.

Planning to implement a trail system in cooperation with the Central California Irrigation District (CCID) has been undertaken along the Main Canal which generally runs north and south through the City. This trail system would tie the Los Banos Creek area to the south eastern part of the City. The recent abandonment of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of-way, also provides an opportunity to enhance the pedestrian and bicycle circulation system, with a "central City pathway" and provide access to the downtown from development to the east and west. The concept of a pedestrian trail and bicycle system which ties together the potential Los Banos Creek trail system with the trail system on the CCID facilities is to be pursued. Figure LU-1 shows open space land uses along the canal and railroad right-of-way that could be used as an off-road linear park system and function as alternative transportation routes throughout the City.

Parkways are essentially elongated parks that are usually restricted to bicycle and pedestrian traffic. A parkway system is intended to serve as a connection between the existing park system or to provide a pleasant and/or alternative means of travel within the City. Although no specific acreage standard is applicable to parkway development, a minimum right-of-way of 100 feet is desirable, with portions being large to encompass recreation (passive or active) facilities/amenities.

Los Banos Creek Trail System

The Los Banos Creek Trail System would generally provide a buffer area between the urban development on the west side of the City and the agricultural uses extending to the urban limit line. The trail system would be designed to serve as a hike/jog/bike facility, which would incorporate several larger active and passive recreational areas. These areas would be designed to serve the Office Industrial uses immediately adjacent to the Creek, which could include tables for lunch, landscaped areas, water fountains and some covered sheltered areas with BBQ facilities. In addition, the trail system for the Los Banos Creek is recommended to include an exercise station program, with various stations being located at an average distance of 1/8 to 1/4 miles apart. This exercise station system will be designed and incorporated into the jogging/hiking trail along the creek.

A interconnection of the Los Banos Creek Trail System will be located at the junction of the Creek and the CCID Main Canal. This interconnection will effectively provide a linear trail system that will serve and tie together the Creek area with south and southeastern portions of the City.

The Los Banos Creek system has potential for multi-purpose recreation, public facility and habitat restoration activities. Certain areas along Los Banos Creek could be integrated into surface water recharge facilities and wetland restoration projects. Habitat restoration in connection with surface water recharge could provide opportunities to create a "wetland mitigation bank" which may be used to off-set environmental impacts of development. Such mitigation banks can also be a source of revenue to the City to carry out capital development project benefitting recreational facilities.

Main Canal (CCID) Trail System

The Main Canal generally transverses the City in a north/south direction. As it transverses the City, it is readily accessible to a large area of residential development, along with being adjacent to two existing parks. The trail system for the Main Canal should be limited to a walking, bicycle, jogging and hiking pathway along the bank of the canal. Active and passive recreational facility will be available where the parkway adjoins existing or proposed parks. Landscaping and vegetation should be limited to non-intrusive species that would not create a maintenance expense or hazard to the existing operation of the CCID canal.

It is planned that the Main Canal and Los Banos Creek Parkway system be interconnected with the "Central City Pathway" system to form a "network system"

throughout the City which will include all major parkway sections (Main Canal, Los Banos Creek, Central City Pathway, and San Luis Canal).

As the Main Canal and Central City Pathway pass through the designated Industrial areas, passive recreational uses should be encourage to be developed in conjunction with industrial development proposal. Uses to be considered include but are not limited to; picnic areas (lunch/break tables), water fountains, BBQ areas, covered picnic areas, horseshoe pits, landscaped areas, and open play area.

San Luis Canal Trail System

The parkway system should be planned along the western side of canal to include both passive and active recreational opportunities. The landscaping design should be limited to non-intrusive species that would not create a maintenance expense or hazard to the continued operations of the canal. The parkway trail system would be ultimately designed to include a bicycle, jogging, hiking, and walking system along the canal bank. In addition, the development of parcels adjacent to the canal should be required as part of Tentative Subdivision Map development standards to include pocket area to the parkway. Amenities should be consistent with the standards for pocket park or play lot development. Day-lighted Cul-de-Sac should also be encouraged when residential development abuts the parkway area.

The San Luis Canal Trail/Parkway System is to be interconnected with the "network system" by means of connection to the "Central City Pathway", along with the proposed non-motorized transportation routes included in the City's General Plan.

Central City Pathway

With the recent abandonment of the UPRR right-of-way through the downtown area, an opportunity for not only downtown revitalization but for multi-use recreation was created with the "Central City Pathway". The major design element of the downtown portion of the "Central City Pathway" system is to provide a focus area for community events, such as farmers markets, spring festivals, summer concerts, open air markets, and special events. Design elements for the downtown portions (between 2nd and 7th Streets) of the central City pathway system have been included in the Downtown Revitalization Strategy (October 1997). The remaining portions of the Central City Pathway system should be developed to incorporate the net-work system concept. The design criteria should be reflective of the walking, hiking, jogging and bicycle trail system. In addition, with the inclusion of pocket park areas should be pursued when adequate space is available for construction. For vacant land designated for residential development, development conditions should include the construction of pocket areas. Those pocket areas should include, but are not limited to the following amenities; picnic areas, play-lots, BBQ areas, landscaped area, horseshoe pits, tot-lots and other older children play equipment. Day-lighted Cul-de-Sacs should be encouraged in residential subdivision design to allow for direct access to the central City pathway. Opportunities currently exist for open ended Cul-de-Sacs with existing streets that terminate at the Central City Pathway (circulation constraints where the Central City Pathway was used

as railroad). For portions of the pathway, that generally transverses commercial and industrial areas, similar pocket areas should be considered as conditions of development approval when new development occurs. Those areas should include areas with tables for employee lunch or break period(s), water fountains and landscaped areas.

Golf Course Opportunities

As part of future Area Plans, a public golf course may be included. The west side of Los Banos is more opportune for creating a community golf course, either public or private. There are fewer constraints with regard to infringement of sensitive habitat areas, better overall water quality, opportunities for access and ability to integrate a golf course with natural features. Such a golf course could incorporate features of Los Banos Creek, potential for wetland restoration or a combination of very low to low density residential development on both sides of Los Banos Creek. Development west of Los Banos Creek would require special consideration in terms of encroachment into agricultural lands and sensitivity to habitat issues. However, with appropriate design tied to open space and recreation amenities east of Los Banos Creek, a sensitive and upscale project could be seriously considered and encouraged.

Existing Park & Recreation Facilities

The City operates and maintains 11 pocket parks (5.68 acres), seven neighborhood parks (14.65 acres), and eight community parks (105.0 acres). A list of the existing parks facilities and school open space is shown in Table OCR-1. The Ag Sports Complex, a Community/Regional Park, is only partially developed with play fields. Presently, approximately 11 acres of the park is developed. Over the years the City has prepared and reviewed a number of park development proposals, but has not selected a build-out program.

Each individual park site contains various types of facilities which are based on the needs of the residents served by the park, park size and geographic characteristics. Picnic areas and playground equipment are usually deemed essential for a park to serve the surrounding neighborhood. All of the City's Neighborhood Parks provide playground apparatus and family picnic areas. Specialized recreational facilities (e.g., tennis courts, swimming pool, ball fields) exist at three of the City's facilities. The most common specialized facilities are lighted ballfields.

Most of the 11 pocket parks also provide for playground equipment and multi-purpose courts to serve the needs of nearby residents.

Existing Park Inventory					Table OCR-1
Park Name	Park Type and Acres				
	Neighborhood	Pocket	Community (Minor)	Community (Major)	School (Open Space)
Skylark Park	1.3				
Orchard Terrace Park	1.5				
JoLin Park	3.6				
Airport Park		.18			
Ranchwood Park			4.5		
Citrus Park #1		0.3			
Citrus Park #2	1.0				
Davis Park		0.6			
City Park		0.9			
Talbott Park				10.7	
Los Banos Gardens Park		0.85			
Rancho Di Amigo		0.6			
Big Page Park	1.85				
Flag Pole Park		0.65			
County Park				6.5	
Little Page Park		0.8			
College Greens Park			5.1		
Presidential Estates		0.25			
Colorado Park				8.4	
Cresthills Park	3.6				
Catholic Park		1.0			
Wolfsen Park	1.8				
Highway 33 Park		0.27			
Fairgrounds Sports Park				5.6	
Ag Sports Complex				50.0	
HG Fawcett (canal walk)				14.2	
Los Banos Elementary					4.0
Miano School					7.0
Henry Miller Elementary					6.0
Los Banos Jr. High					6.0
Los Banos High School					40.0
TOTAL	14.65	5.68	9.60	95.40	63.00

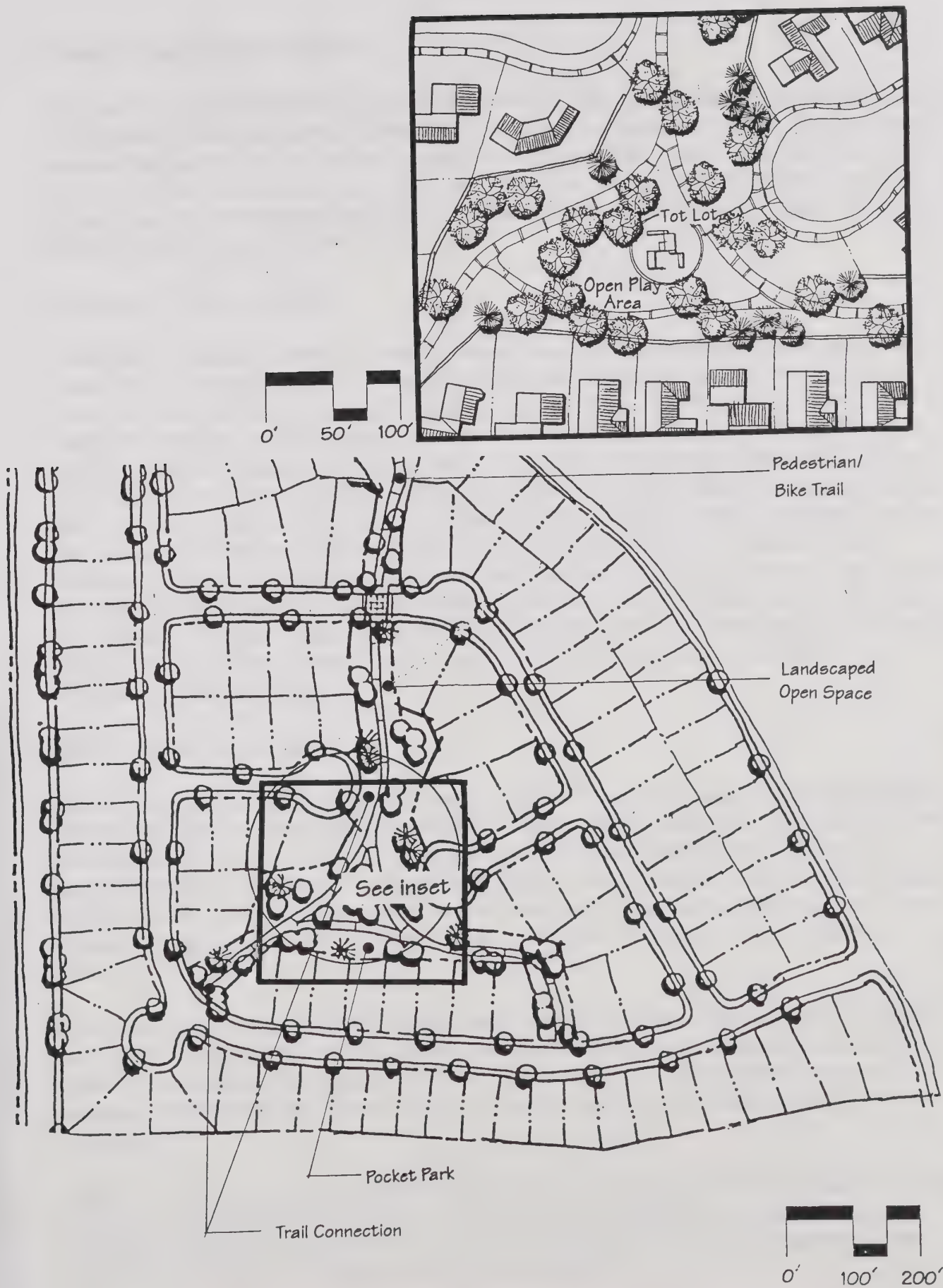


Figure OCR-5: Linear Trail Concept

Merced County Park Facilities

The Los Banos Unified School District owns and the City operates, County Park located on Highway 152 in the center of the City. In addition to picnic areas, the park contains a museum, scout house, recreation hall, swimming pool, and library. Currently, the City's Recreation Department offers a limited swim program at the swimming pool. The park not only provides recreation activities for the residents of Los Banos, but also sees use from the traveling public along Highway 152.

State and Federal Facilities

There are six nearby state and federal recreation areas, and one proposed new state area at the planned Los Banos Grandes Reservoir. The State Park at the San Luis Reservoir and O'Neill Forebay approximately eight miles west of the City offers overnight camping, picnic facilities for day use, fishing, and water sports opportunities. Improvements and expansion of this facility is expected over time. The State Los Banos Creek Detention Reservoir, approximately eight miles south of the City provides sailing, water sports, camping, and fishing activities. The State Department of Fish and Game Los Banos Wildlife Area, approximately three miles north of the City offers fishing, hunting, camping, and wildlife observation activities to Los Banos residents. The federal government operates three National Wildlife Refugees within 10 miles of the City: San Luis National Wildlife Refuge; Merced National Wildlife Refuge; and Kesterson National Wildlife Refuge. These areas provide fishing, hunting, picnicking, and wildlife observation opportunities.

Public School Facilities

School playground equipment, ball fields, play courts and open grass areas meet some community and neighborhood recreational needs in nearly all areas of the City. School facilities most often used for recreation are play fields and various ball courts (i.e., basketball, tennis, volleyball). Interior facilities such as gymnasiums and multi-purpose rooms are also used, but are typically only available for organized activities. With many schools going to year round education, joint use of school facilities will probably diminish.

The Los Banos Unified School District makes considerable contributions to community recreation needs through use of on-site facilities and programs for adult education, athletics, and social and cultural activities. The District's Los Banos High School campus facilities include a football stadium, playing fields, tennis courts, and gymnasium.

Elementary schools in the Los Banos Unified School District provide neighborhood park level recreation facilities to the community. Facilities include paved areas for court games, playground equipment, turf areas for free play, softball diamonds, fenced tot-lots, and also a gymnasium at the Junior High School.

Park Acreage Standards

To effectively meet the needs of the community, park standards for both community and neighborhood parks are proposed. In development of these standards three factors were considered:

- ☐ The population projections for the development area;
- ☐ Siting criteria of new facilities like major roadways and schools; and
- ☐ Minimum park size to provide efficient maintenance.

As shown in Table OCR-2, a ratio of 1.5 acres of Neighborhood Park; and 1.5 acres of Minor Community Park, and 2 acres of Major Community Park per 1,000 population is established.

City of Los Banos General Plan Park Standards			Table OCR-2
Park Type	Acres Per 1,000 Persons	Acres Per Park	Service Area
Neighborhood	1.5	2 to 9 acres	1/2 mile
Minor Community	1.5	9 plus acres	2 miles
Major Community	2.0	15 plus acres	2 miles

This standard is consistent with the City's Ordinances implementing the Quimby Act which allows for dedications of parkland or in-lieu payment for parks development as a condition of development. The size and location of the parks will also depend on timing of development and siting of other City and School District facilities.

Future Park Needs based on Population

The acreage needs and public park land ratios may be adjusted to account for on-site private recreational facilities, extended landscaping or pedestrian walkways, and other development amenities. Regional parks were not included in the City's parkland ratio since by their nature, they are more likely to be located outside of the City's Planning Area. The Los Banos Area Parks and Recreation Commission has proposals for additional parkland outside of the City's Urban Limit Line serving a larger population base (including the City). Given these ratios, Table OCR-3 indicates the additional parkland needed to accommodate the projected population growth, using the General Plan Park Standards. The general park locations are shown as circles on the Land Use Map LU-1 found in the back pocket of the General Plan. Figure OCR-6 identifies both existing and planned park locations.

Parkland Need From Projected Population Growth

Table OCR-3

Year	Population	Increase ¹	Parkland Need		
			Neighborhood ²	Minor Community ³	Major Community ⁴
2000	23,278	2,584	3.9	3.9	5.2
2005	28,321	5,043	7.6	7.6	10.1
2010	34,457	6,136	9.2	9.2	12.3
2020	51,005	16,548	24.8	24.8	33.1
	Totals	30,311	45.5	45.5	60.7

Notes:

¹ From the 1998 population of 20,694.

² Based on 1.5 acres per 1,000 for Neighborhood Parks.

³ Based on 1.5 acres per 1,000 for Minor Community Parks.

⁴ Based on 2 acres per 1,000 for Major Community Parks

Future Park Locations

At the General Plan level of land use detail it is almost impossible to fix the exact locations of future parks. The City desires to maintain flexibility in the design and development of parks, as well as to encourage innovative development designs from residential developers. The general location map, Figure OCR-6, is meant to show an approximate location for future park facilities in the overall context of the General Plan Land Use Map. The locations shown for future parks are conceptual and indicative of a future park location based on service area radius, major streets and transportation facilities, and surrounding land uses. Parks should be located in the general vicinity shown on this map.

Access and security are the two most important considerations in placement of parkland. Neighborhood Parks should be easy to walk to, not require small children to cross major collectors, arterials, railroads, major canals or other obstacles. The design of the park should limit backup lots, and encourage new development to face the park. While this may increase development costs of the park through the need for more sidewalk and roadway, this cost is offset by greater security. Public safety officials should be able to see into the park easily from the street.

Community parks are intended for more adult-oriented and organized sport activity. As such, adequate vehicle access and parking should be provided. Often a portion of the community park is developed to allow for its use as a neighborhood park by surrounding residences.

Legend

- City Limits
- - - - Urban Limits (S.O.I.)
- Area of Interest

LEGEND

- (P) Future Park
- (ES) Future Elementary School
- (MS) Future Middle School
- (HS) Future High School

- 1. Miller & Lux Center
- 2. Skylark Park
- 3. Davis Park
- 4. Citrus Terrace II Park
- 5. Citrus Terrace Park
- 6. City Park
- 7. Talbot Park
- 8. Colorado Park
- 9. Big Page Park
- 10. Wolfsen Park
- 11. Flag Pole Park
- 12. Los Banos Garden Park
- 13. Catholic Park
- 14. Little Page Park
- 15. Presidential Estates
- 16. County Park
- 17. Regional Park
- 18. Henry Miller Elementary School
- 19. Ranchwood Park
- 20. Westside Union Intermediate School
- 21. Los Banos Elementary School
- 22. Los Banos High School
- 23. San Luis High School
- 24. R.M. Miano Elementary School
- 25. 7th Day Adventist School
- 26. Catholic School
- 27. Los Banos Jr. High School

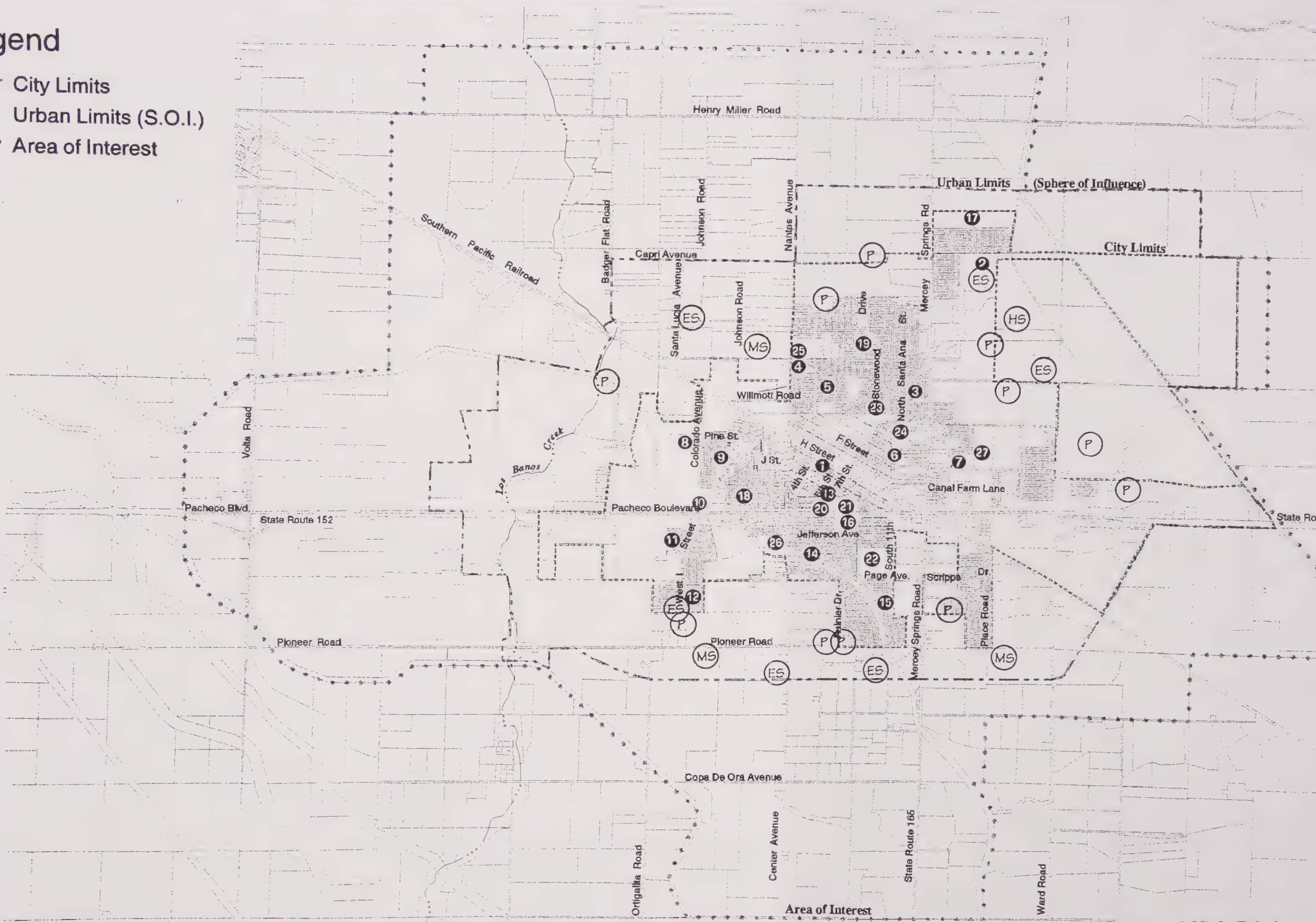
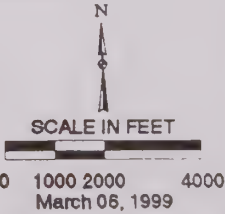


Figure OCR-6: Existing and Proposed Park Locations



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GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, PROGRAMS

The following Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs are organized in the following manner:

Open Space

Vegetation and Wildlife

Conservation

Water Resources

Energy

Historic/Cultural Resources

Recreation

Preservation, Parks and Facilities

GOAL

The general goal of the Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element is to:

☐ **Designate, conserve and protect open space, peripheral agricultural areas, recreational, and historic/cultural resources in the Los Banos Area of Interest for current and future residents of the City.**

Open Space

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE OCR 1

Support preservation of existing agricultural lands at the periphery of the Los Banos Urban Limit Line.

POLICY OCR 1.1 (AQ)

Create a greenbelt/open space buffer around the perimeter of the city that provides a clear sense of identity for the City of Los Banos.

PROGRAM OCR 1.1-A (AQ)

Very low density residential and industrial land uses will be included in the land use plan to reduce density toward the edge of the Los Banos Urban Limit Line. The sizing of sewer lines will be reduced as they approach the edge of urban development in the Urban Limit Line to limit growth influences beyond the Urban Limit Line.

PROGRAM OCR 1.1-B (AQ)

The City of Los Banos will continue to coordinate land use planning efforts with Merced County to ensure that agricultural land use continues to surround the Los Banos Urban Limit Line.

PROGRAM OCR 1.1-C (AQ)

In connection with General Plan Circulation policies, landscape design requirements shall be required for new projects which develop along the entryways to the City, in particular Highways 152 and 165. Landscape design within required setbacks should promote a sense of transition from the surrounding agricultural area to urban setting. Utilization of trees to screen urban uses along these entryways shall be required within the setback according to adopted City Standards.

OBJECTIVE OCR 2

Create an agricultural land Avoid and Buffer program that can be implemented in Los Banos.

POLICY OCR 2.1

The City shall avoid the designation/rezoning of residential uses for land sharing a boundary with an existing agricultural use or designation outside of the area designated for urban growth. Acceptable land uses adjacent to agriculture include:

1. Industrial/commercial uses; and
2. Physical barriers such as freeways, creeks, canals, etc.; and
3. Public uses such as wastewater and water treatment facilities, groundwater recharge areas, golf courses, airports and regional parks.

Within the area designated for urban growth, proposed residential designations/rezoning that share a boundary with existing agricultural uses shall demonstrate that adequate buffer can be provided.

PROGRAM OCR 2.1-A

The City will evaluate future development proposals near the Urban Limit Line with regard to this policy. The City shall make findings as to consistency to this policy and make a determination whether or not an adequate buffer can be provided.

POLICY OCR 2.2

Where it is not possible to avoid the designation/rezoning of residential uses of land adjoining agricultural uses at the Urban Limit Line, it shall be the responsibility of the development applicant to demonstrate:

1. That the proposed use will not conflict with normal agricultural practices as allowed in the agricultural zoning of the property.
2. That sufficient physical buffer has been provided in the development design, or on land adjacent to the proposed residential land, to ensure that agricultural

practices can continue, without substantial modification, to accommodate the new use. The buffer can include additional setbacks, walls, roads, canals or other similar structures that prohibit pedestrian access between the residential and agricultural use, and increase the separation to allow continued agricultural use of the property.

3. That there is a guaranteed funding mechanism in place that will ensure full long-term maintenance of the buffer between the residential and agricultural use.

PROGRAM OCR 2.2-A

The City will evaluate future development proposals near the Urban Limit Line with regard to this policy. The City shall make findings as to consistency to this policy and make a determination whether the buffer would be appropriate and can be implemented as proposed by the development applicant.

PROGRAM OCR 2.2-B

The City shall evaluate the creation of two levels of buffer, one for inside, and the other for outside of the area designated for urban use.

PROGRAM OCR 2.2-C

The City shall develop guidelines in conjunction with the Farm Bureau as an aid to developers to implement the buffer concept.

OBJECTIVE OCR 3 (AQ)

Guide urban development toward vacant or under-used land within the urbanized area and direct new growth toward contiguous lands to protect from premature urban development of agricultural lands and other open spaces used for the managed production of resources.

POLICY OCR 3.1 (AQ)

Existing agricultural areas shall be retained in agricultural use until the time that such areas are needed for logical urban expansion.

OBJECTIVE OCR 4

Maximize public open space with minimum management.

POLICY OCR 4.1

Open Space dedications shall provide a plan for funding to ensure that financing for long-term maintenance is provided.

POLICY OCR 4.2

Ownership and management responsibility of public open space shall be assigned to the agency/organization best suited to meet this responsibility.

POLICY OCR 4.3

Adequate security of open space shall be provided to ensure that applicable laws and regulations are enforced.

POLICY OCR 4.4

Residential developments shall be encouraged to provide private open space areas.

OBJECTIVE OCR 5

Maximize open space through appropriate acquisition mechanisms.

POLICY OCR 5.1

All future development of residential subdivisions, including all Master Plans and/or Specific Plans shall include appropriate mechanisms for acquisition, improvement, and maintenance of open space.

POLICY OCR 5.2

An equitable balance shall be sought between development density and open space to be preserved.

PROGRAM OCR 5.2-A

The City may require participation, directly or indirectly in the acquisition of land for the recharge of groundwater, disposal of treated wastewater or storm drainage outside of the Los Banos Urban Limit Line. Such programs may be used as credit for the long-term preservation of agricultural or open space lands.

PROGRAM OCR 5.2-B

Require dedication of appropriate open space land as a condition of approval for proposed development projects. Establish a method for permanent preservation of open space acquired through a land pooling program. Such designations shall be registered on the property title and shall be maintained should the property be sold.

OBJECTIVE OCR 6

Encourage the use of landscaped open space as a buffer between potentially non-compatible land uses.

POLICY OCR 6.1

Utilize open space areas to provide neighborhood identity and to the extent feasible, insulate the neighborhood from conflicting land uses which may produce objectionable light, odor or noise.

POLICY OCR 6.2 (AQ)

Where feasible, Arterial and Major Collector streets should be constructed to provide landscaping along the edges and in median strips to enhance these street systems as aesthetic open space corridors.

PROGRAM OCR 6.2-A (AQ)

The City shall develop design guidelines and standards for the construction of landscaping and improvement of Arterial and Major Collector streets which are to be landscaped.

POLICY OCR 6.3

Provide for open space and landscaping along freeway and highway right-of-ways to present an attractive entry to the City of Los Banos.

PROGRAM OCR 6.3-A

As planning proceeds on the Highway 152 by-pass, and there are improvements to Highway 165, an open space landscaped corridor should be established along the right-of-way. Dedication of this land should be a development condition or otherwise acquired by the State or City for improvement and maintenance of the open space area.

Vegetation & Wildlife

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE OCR 7 (AQ)

Encourage the provision of open space areas throughout the Area of Interest through the preservation and enhancement of natural features or the joint use of other public facilities and/or rights-of-ways.

POLICY OCR 7.1 (AQ)

To the extent feasible, maintain water courses within the Los Banos Planning Area as components of a stormwater disposal program, and a possible recreational trail system. Public access within potentially sensitive habitat areas of the sloughs or waterways shall be considered individually to ensure protection of existing habitat resources.

POLICY OCR 7.2 (AQ)

Major utility easement corridors shall be designated for recreational open space unless an acceptable trail alternative is included in a development plan.

POLICY OCR 7.3

Where appropriate and feasible, establish permanent mechanisms to protect wetlands, riparian corridors, and identified habitat areas.

PROGRAM OCR 7.3-A

The City shall preserve natural water courses, wetlands and riparian corridors through requirements for land dedication and open space improvements imposed during the land development process.

PROGRAM OCR 7.3-B

The City of Los Banos will ensure that there is not net loss of wetland habitat resulting from urban development within the Urban Limit Line. Therefore, full compensation for wetland losses associated with public and private development will be required. This may be accomplished by the project developer by a design

and build replacement of wetlands equal in size to the wetlands lost; or in conjunction with an accepted program provided by others such as a mitigation bank or similar vehicles. Such programs shall meet current state and federal requirements.

PROGRAM OCR 7.3-C

Land use east of the San Luis Canal shall be reserved as Agriculture, Environmental Reserve, and Public Facilities (e.g. College). Land east of the Santa Fe Grade (Arroyo Canal) shall be reserved as agriculture, environmental reserve, and public facilities such as the City's wastewater treatment facility and stormwater disposal areas.

PROGRAM OCR 7.3-D

Land use between the San Luis Canal and Santa Fe Grade (Arroyo Canal) should remain in Agriculture, however portions above Highway 152 may be developed as Industrial provided that proposed developments address the potential taking of listed federal and state endangered species. A thorough and complete analysis and appropriate mitigation plan shall be prepared if there is to be a "taking" as defined by federal and state statutes.

As provided in the Land Use Element "Area Plans that are required between the San Luis Canal and the Santa Fe Grade shall include in the Plan reasonable designs to provide a buffer between identified sensitive habitats and ensure that development does not create significant adverse impacts on the identified sensitive habitats such as major wetlands and the habitat of the Giant Garter Snake where it has been identified as being present.

The proposed Highway 152 By-Pass shall not be located in an area which has been identified as Giant Garter Snake habitat without appropriate mitigation. An appropriate buffer between an identified habitat and the arterial street could be low intensity industrial uses which also meet the habitat buffering requirements.

PROGRAM OCR 7.3-E

Land use north of Highway 152 and east of the San Luis Canal includes a potential stormwater disposal area. This disposal area may be developed for conjunctive use of low intensity recreation or open space. The development of this area requires a master plan which addresses restricted access, continuation of surrounding agricultural uses, habitat issues and water quality issues.

PROGRAM OCR 7.3-F

Land use west of the San Luis Canal includes residential development. A potentially sensitive Giant Garter Snake habitat may exist along the San Luis Canal and may extend to the west into existing agricultural uses. Residential development in this area shall provide for a permanent buffer to the San Luis Canal of at least 50 feet in width from the toe of the canal facility. If the presence of the Giant Garter Snake is verified, the buffer may be required to be greater than 50 feet. This buffer strip shall be used to separate the canal from any urban

residential uses. The long-term maintenance responsibility of the buffer shall be resolved at the time of development. The buffer shall be kept in a manner that it will not constitute a fire hazard or otherwise a public health and safety hazard.

PROGRAM OCR 7.3-G

The City shall reduce the intensity of street lighting in new development areas within 1,000 feet of the San Luis Canal by means of shrouds that direct light towards the ground and away from wetland habitats to the north and east.

PROGRAM OCR 7.3-H

Monitor environmental mitigation measures established by program and project EIRs to protect endangered wildlife and their habitats. Mitigation measures may include the permanent protection when ever possible consistent with state and federal regulations. Restoration or relocation of wildlife habitat shall be considered if it is consistent with state and federal regulations and protection of the habitat is found to be physically and economically infeasible.

POLICY OCR 7.4

Vernal pools which may be located in the Los Banos General Urban Limit Line shall be identified and avoided. If avoiding vernal pools would in the judgement of the City lead to their ultimate destruction or diminution, then mitigation alternatives should be considered.

POLICY OCR 7.5

Avoid the potential negative impacts of increased human activity on sensitive habitat areas when establishing new recreational or public facilities.

PROGRAM OCR 7.5-A

The City shall continue to review the potential impacts on wildlife habitats from stormwater and treated wastewater disposal techniques in the preparation of facility Master Plans.

PROGRAM OCR 7.5-B

The City shall continue to explore alternatives for the reuse of treated wastewater and stormwater for the benefit of the surrounding habitat uses.

PROGRAM OCR 7.5-C

The City shall implement a development-free buffer on the east side of Los Banos Creek with a minimum width of 100 feet as measured from the outer edge of the canopy of riparian trees. Low intensity types of development may be allowed within the buffer area which include trails, golf courses and other open space amenities that can be shown to be compatible with the purposes of the buffer.

PROGRAM OCR 7.5-D

To the extent possible, the City will establish an urban park/trail system along Los Banos Creek that locates all public recreation facilities outside of existing riparian habitat. Where feasible and desirable, the City may undertake to restore riparian vegetation to broad areas within creekside parks which are not currently

vegetated. This may be accomplished in conjunction with water recharge efforts or creation of mitigation banking lands.

PROGRAM OCR 7.5-E

Where flood control facilities may be necessary along Los Banos Creek, they shall be designed to permit maintenance of riparian vegetation in high-flow channels. These facilities shall also be designed to permit the unobstructed movement of land animals along the creek.

PROGRAM OCR 7.5-F

Road crossings and bridges will be designed to minimize impact to riparian vegetation within the Los Banos Creek riparian area. All road crossings and bridges will be designed to permit the unobstructed movement of land animals along the creek.

POLICY OCR 7.6

Promote the preservation of existing mature trees and encourage the planting of appropriate street and shade trees in all new developments.

PROGRAM OCR 7.6-A

Develop and adopt standards that provide for the planting of street and shade trees in new residential and commercial developments.

Water Resources

Objectives Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE OCR 8

Promote the conservation of water within the Los Banos community.

POLICY OCR 8.1

Maintain ordinances as necessary within the Los Banos Municipal Code which promote water conservation.

PROGRAM OCR 8.1-A

Maintain permanent water conservation measures such as:

- 1. Continue enforcement of water waste ordinances;*
- 2. Continue penalties for water waste offenders;*
- 3. Enforce guidelines for drought tolerant landscapes; and*
- 4. Structure water rate schedules to encourage conservation.*

PROGRAM OCR 8.1-B

Maintain water use limitations that could be enacted by the City Council in the event of severe drought. Measures could include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. *Limit all domestic outdoor water usage to designated days;*
2. *Limitations on all auto washing by individuals, auto dealerships, and private and charitable car washes;*
3. *Prohibit domestic irrigation between 10:00am and 7:00pm; and*
4. *Designate specific types of landscape irrigation to be discontinued.*

POLICY OCR 8.2

Minimize usage of water for landscape irrigation by requiring new and rehabilitated landscapes to be water conserving.

PROGRAM OCR 8.2-A

Establish standards for landscape review which include preferred plants and sprinkler/irrigation criteria.

PROGRAM OCR 8.2-B

Apply conservation requirements to all landscapes within industrial, commercial, institutional, multi-family residential common areas, model homes and developer landscaped areas.

PROGRAM OCR 8.2-C

Require projects to submit planting plans, irrigation plans, irrigation schedules and water use estimates for City approval prior to issuance of building permits.

POLICY OCR 8.3

Large scale industrial water users are required to develop internal water recycling programs during plan development and review processes.

POLICY OCR 8.4

All residential, commercial and industrial remodeling or renovation projects shall be required to install domestic water conserving devices.

OBJECTIVE OCR 9

Ensure adequate groundwater reserves are maintained for present and future domestic, commercial, and industrial uses.

POLICY OCR 9.1

Require proponents of non-agricultural water intensive land uses, which are determined to use more water than the previous use, to mitigate groundwater impacts.

PROGRAM OCR 9.1-A

Explore agreements with the Central California Irrigation District to provide for water recharge and to ensure reasonable amounts of water delivery for recharge during drought periods.

PROGRAM OCR 9.1-B

To the extent determined feasible by good engineering practice geotechnical practice, combined use of recharge areas, public recreation, and wetland mitigation programs or banking should be considered by the City and other public agencies. Such areas may become part of the City's open space or recreational trail system. Such programs may be jointly or individually managed by the City of Los Banos.

POLICY OCR 9.2

The potential for joint agency cooperation in developing groundwater recharge along the upper reaches of Los Banos Creek, Los Banos Reservoir, and new water projects should be explored. New water projects planned by the State or Federal Government should not reduce the amount of water which is recharged for use in the City of Los Banos.

OBJECTIVE OCR 10

Ensure groundwater quality is maintained at a satisfactory level for domestic water consumption.

POLICY OCR 10.1

Avoid degradation of groundwater reserves by domestic and industrial land uses.

PROGRAM OCR 10.1-A

Seek to connect unincorporated development within the urban fringe to the wastewater collection and treatment network at the earliest possible time.

PROGRAM OCR 10.1-B

Require proponents of industrial-oriented projects to submit proposals for water use. Encourage the reuse of water within industrial systems.

PROGRAM OCR 10.1-C

Require National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System compliance for all new development which may be regulated by that program.

PROGRAM OCR 10.1-D

The City will take an active roll in monitoring groundwater quantity and quality in areas east of Los Banos Creek which are considered to be recharge areas for the City's domestic water supply. Of particular concern will be agricultural uses which may contribute to groundwater degradation by engaging in illegal wastewater disposal or chemical disposal practices. Such potential violations shall be immediately brought to the attention of County, State, and Federal agencies.

Energy

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE OCR 11

Conserve non-renewable energy resources and maximize the use of renewable energy resources.

POLICY OCR 11.1

The City shall review development projects for programs and designs which:

1. Encourage more efficient use of private vehicles and increased use of mass transit and alternative transportation modes;
2. Promote the retrofitting of existing buildings to be energy efficient;
3. Require water conservation and energy efficiency techniques to be incorporated into the design of all development projects; and
4. Support recycling activities throughout the City.

PROGRAM OCR 11.1-A

The City shall adopt guidelines that encourage energy efficient development design. Possible energy efficient design techniques include: provisions for solar access; building siting to maximize natural heating and cooling; and landscaping to aid passive cooling and the protection from winter winds.

Historic/Cultural Resources

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE OCR 12

Preserve and establish cultural and historic resources.

POLICY OCR 12.1

Require archaeological studies by a certified archeologist in areas of suspected archeological significance prior to approval of development projects.

PROGRAM OCR 12.1-A

Consult with the Central California Information Center at California State University, Stanislaus on any project that could have an impact on cultural resources.

PROGRAM OCR 12.1-B

Avoid impacts on cultural resources when archeological studies reveal the presence of cultural resources at a development site. If avoidance is infeasible,

require site testing by a qualified archeologist to determine the significance of the resources, and implement recommended mitigation measures.

PROGRAM OCR 12.1-C

Halt construction at a development site if cultural resources are encountered unexpectedly during construction and require consultation with a qualified archeologist to determine the significance of the resources.

POLICY OCR 12.2

Promote the preservation and restoration of historical sites and structures within the General Plan Area that are significant to the City's or the region's cultural or historic background.

PROGRAM OCR 12.2-A

Identify historic structures within the General Plan Area and, where appropriate, promote the inclusion of these structures on the State's Inventory of Historic Sites and the National Register of Historic Places. Work with property owners in seeking registration of historical structures as State Historic Landmarks or listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Recreation

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE OCR 13

Maximize public value from open space for recreational uses.

POLICY OCR 13.1

Continue to provide public access to open space to the maximum extent feasible.

POLICY OCR 13.2

The City shall actively pursue and use public and private funding sources that become available for land acquisition, facility construction, program development and maintenance of park and open space areas.

PROGRAM OCR 13.2-A

The City shall continue to implement park dedication requirements and continue to collect park in-lieu and park improvement fees as a condition of development pursuant to the Quimby Act.

PROGRAM OCR 13.2-B

Developers required to dedicate land to the City for parks purposes shall provide necessary improvements prior to dedication to minimize wind and rain erosion of the on-site soils, and avoid the creation of dust on the land.

PROGRAM OCR 13.2-C

Where a project involves potential open space, natural resource reserves, or recreational lands of interest to more than one entity, the City shall work cooperatively with the other involved agencies.

PROGRAM OCR 13.2-D

To the extent feasible, large storm drainage facilities shall be designed to accommodate community open space use. To the extent these facilities are sized to accommodate storm water that area shall not be considered in the amount of land available for public recreation.

Program OCR 13.2-E

The City shall work to identify and promote potential shared arrangements for owning, improving, and managing open space/conservation/recreational areas of mutual interest.

Program OCR 13.2-F

The City shall identify service areas for neighborhood parks that link the park to the surrounding neighborhood. The service areas shall be designed so that children do not have to cross major streets, waterways or other potentially hazardous obstacles. Each neighborhood park service area shall be clearly depicted on a map of the City.

OBJECTIVE OCR 14

Develop public park lands at the local and community levels to meet the recreational needs of current and future residents of Los Banos. The general locations of future parks is shown on Figure OCR-6.

POLICY OCR 14.1

The location of future parks on Figure OCR-6 and on Land Use Figure LU-1, are meant to be indicative of desired service areas and not specific locations. The City intends to maintain flexibility in the location of the parks and to encourage innovative park and development design to the benefit of the residents.

PROGRAM OCR 14.1-A

The City shall prepare and maintain a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to provide guidance in the location and equipping of public recreation areas.

POLICY OCR 14.2

Discourage the development of Pocket Parks unless such parks are part of a Planned Development and the long-term maintenance of such facilities are guaranteed by a legally established maintenance district.

PROGRAM OCR 14.2-A

If Pocket Parks are allowed they shall be of an efficient size for operation and maintenance, generally between 0.25 and two (2) acres.

PROGRAM OCR 14.2-B (AQ)

If Pocket Parks are allowed they shall have a general service area of approximately one-quarter (¼) mile radius, and serve a specific neighborhood in a Planned Development and not be generally available the public at large.

PROGRAM OCR 14.2-C

The City does not intend to accept Pocket Parks into its maintained park system, therefore access may be restricted to the use of the park within a Planned Development project.

POLICY OCR 14.3

Establish Neighborhood Parks at a ratio of one and one-half (1.5) acres of park land per 1,000 residents.

PROGRAM OCR 14.3-A

Neighborhood Parks shall be of an efficient size for operation and maintenance, generally between 2 and 9 acres.

PROGRAM OCR 14.3-B (AQ)

Neighborhood Parks shall have a general service area of approximately one-half (½) mile radius, and situated to avoid patrons having to cross arterial streets, railroad lines and major waterways.

PROGRAM OCR 14.3-C

Neighborhood Parks shall be designed to promote a safe and clean environment for recreation. The City will encourage development to avoid common rear and side yard property lines with residential uses. Design of the park shall allow visibility from the road.

PROGRAM OCR 14.3-D (AQ)

Whenever possible, Neighborhood Parks shall be developed in conjunction with elementary schools.

POLICY OCR 14.4

Establish Minor Community Parks at a ratio of 1.5 acres per 1,000 residents, and Major Community Parks at a ratio of 2.0 acres of park land per 1,000 residents.

PROGRAM OCR 14.4-A

Major Community Parks shall be of an efficient size for operation and maintenance, generally more than 15 acres.

PROGRAM OCR 14.4-B

Minor Community Parks shall be of an efficient size for operation and maintenance, generally between 9 and 15 acres. Smaller minor community parks may be developed where the need arises and such facilities are compatible with the land uses in the surrounding neighborhoods.

PROGRAM OCR 14.4-C

Minor Community Parks shall be constructed to address a specific community need and at a location where other types of parks are infeasible for the proposed scope of recreational activities or the location is desirable to serve a community wide need.

PROGRAM OCR 14.4-D (AQ)

Community Parks shall have a general service area of approximately two (2) mile radius, and situated to provide adequate access to arterial and collector streets. Care must be taken when siting Community Parks to avoid conflict with nearby residential uses.

PROGRAM OCR 14.4-E

Community Parks shall be designed to promote a safe and clean environment for recreation, and not significantly disruptive to adjoining or nearby uses. The City will encourage development to avoid common rear and side yard property lines with residential uses. Design of the park shall allow visibility from the road.

PROGRAM OCR 14.4-F

Whenever possible, Parks shall be developed in conjunction with other non-conflicting uses such as storm drainage basins, water recharge, water production and noise attenuation buffers.

OBJECTIVE OCR 15

Encourage the development of private recreational facilities for residential projects.

POLICY OCR 15.1

Private recreational facilities shall be encouraged in multiple family residential developments of over five (5) units in size, in order to meet a portion of the open space and recreation needs generated by that development.

POLICY OCR 15.2

Private recreational facilities shall be encouraged in residential planned developments of over one (1) acre in size, in order to meet a portion of the open space and recreation needs generated by that development.

[End of Open Space, Conservation & Recreation Element]

HAZARDS MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Hazards Management Element includes the Seismic Safety, Safety, Noise, and Air Quality sections of the General Plan. This Element provides policy direction to other elements of the General Plan, primarily Land Use, Circulation, and Open Space, Conservation & Recreation. The Air Quality Section is not mandated by State Law, but as the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District (SJVUAPCD) has adopted their plan, they have included a control measure for cities and counties to adopt air quality elements.

A model Air Quality Element, prepared by SJVUAPCD, is currently being reviewed by cities and counties which may result in a comprehensive approach to a regional issue. This plan has addressed many of the issues raised by the SJVUAPCD in each of the various General Plan Elements. The Air Quality Section of the General Plan includes cross references to Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs found throughout the plan.

The Safety Element of the Merced County General Plan (1990) provides much of the comprehensive technical information for developing General Plan policies. From that resource other aspects of the Safety Element can be developed in common with neighboring jurisdictions. For example, establishing and maintaining disaster evacuation routes requires the cooperation of cities and the County. There are similar and mutually supporting relationships established for the various public safety activities. Fire suppression and police services are excellent examples of sharing resources in situations where life and property may be endangered.

SEISMIC SAFETY

The nearest known fault is the Tesla-Ortogonalita fault (Ortogonalita fault). The fault is located about eight miles southwest of the City. While the fault has not been active in historic times, there is no guarantee that it will not be active in the future. Recent seismic studies for the proposed Los Banos Grandes Dam adopted a design criteria for a 6.75 Richter Scale magnitude earth quake on the Ortogonalita fault. That fault, and the other major faults about 40 miles to the west (San Andreas and Calaveras), could generate earthquake intensities of VI, through VIII on the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale. [see Tables HZ-1 and HZ-2] Such intensity earthquakes have occurred at least 11 times since 1810.

The California Division of Mines and Geology has undertaken a complete probabilistic seismic hazard analysis for the Cit of Los Banos. Based on that study the peak ground

acceleration (PGA) is = 0.38g for residential and commercial construction. This ground motion has a 10% chance of exceedance in 50 years and is termed the 'Design Basis Earthquake' by the 1997 Uniform Building Code (Chapter 16). For public school, hospitals, and essential services buildings (e.g. fire stations, police stations, city halls, etc.) the Peak Ground Acceleration is higher, at PGA = 0.49g for the Upper Bound Earthquake. This information should be used for planning and building design.

The special acceleration data provided applies to the entire Los Banos area. Ground motion will increase on the west side of the City, because this is closer to the seismic source, which is the Coast Range-Central Valley blind thrust fault. This information replaces earlier used information received by the City (August 1994).

The City of Los Banos is within Seismic Zone 4 of the 1997 Uniform Building Code. According to the Division of Mines and Geology, there are no active faults in the City of Los Banos, but there is an active blind thrust fault in the vicinity of Interstate 5.

Relationship Between Earthquake Magnitude and Intensity		Table HZ-1
Richter Scale Magnitude	Maximum Expected Intensity (MM) ¹	Distance Felt (kilometers)
2.0 – 2.9	I – II	0
3.0 – 3.9	II – III	15
4.0 – 4.9	IV – V	80
5.0 – 5.9	VI – VII	150
6.0 – 6.9	VII – VIII	220
7.0 – 7.9	IX – X	400
8.0 – 8.9	XI – XII	600

Notes: Source: United States Geologic Survey, Earthquake Intensity Zonation and Quaternary Deposits, Miscellaneous Field Studies Map 9093, 1977.
¹ Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale (refer to Table HZ-2).

The Los Banos area has experienced several noticeable shocks from earthquakes over the past years. Serious earthquakes in recent history were in 1983 near Coalinga, and the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989, but the distances of the earthquakes from Los Banos was too great to cause local damage. Major damage did occur in Los Banos from the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake. Known geologic faults in and near the City of Los Banos are shown in Figure HZ-1

A large earthquake could cause considerable damage to ordinary structures. During an earthquake, most damage, injuries and loss of life results from structural failures due to shaking. The resulting damage is a function of both building structural integrity and soil type. Typically, older buildings fare less well in earthquakes, especially unreinforced masonry walls, and multiple story structures without steel reinforcement.

The Merced County General Plan Safety Element mapped known subsidence areas in the County. Subsidence is the settling or sinking of parts of the earth's crust. There are

various causes of subsidence most of which happen slowly over a long period of time. The exception is tectonic subsidence, which occurs suddenly and is the compaction of soils due to ground-shaking during earthquakes. Merced County is most effected by subsidence caused by groundwater withdrawal, hydrocompaction, and earthquakes.

Most of the subsidence in the Los Banos area is caused by groundwater withdrawal. Figure HZ-2 shows a map where subsidence has been identified in Merced County. The City of Los Banos lies within the area mapped.

FLOOD PRONE AREAS

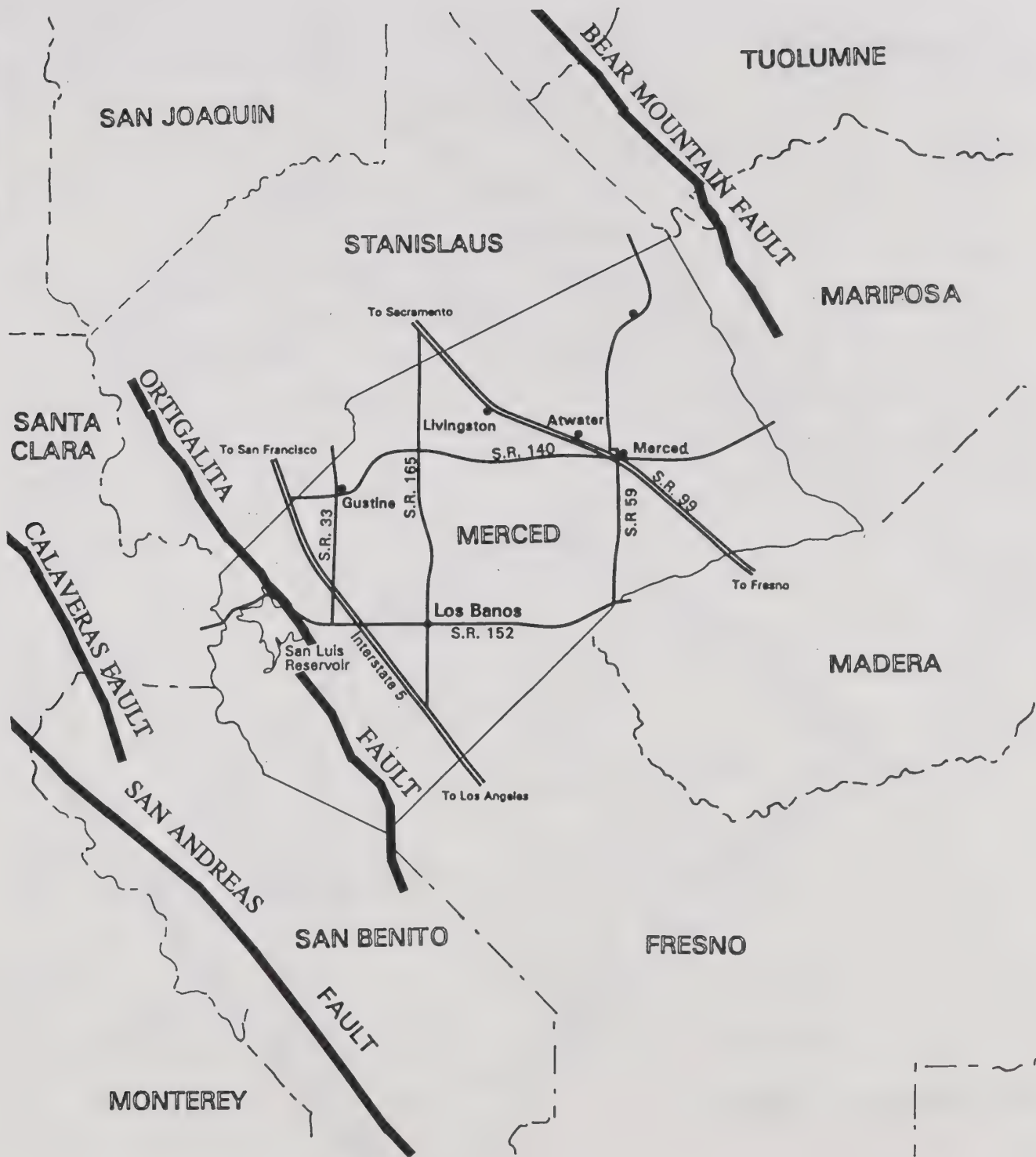
Los Banos is outside any flood prone areas according to the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Flood Insurance Rate Map (Community Panel Number 060188 0725B, September, 1988). Los Banos is within Zone X which is outside the 500 year flood area.

DAM INUNDATION

The City of Los Banos may be effected by a catastrophic dam failure of the San Luis Reservoir, Los Banos Creek Detention Reservoir, Little Panoche Reservoir or McClure Reservoir. Figure HZ-3 shows the probable extent of inundation of a dam failure at either the San Luis Reservoir or Los Banos Creek Detention Reservoir. Figure HZ-4 depicts the probable extent of inundation of a dam failure at either the Little Panoche Reservoir or McClure Reservoir. effecting the City of Los Banos. Dam failure can be the result of a number of natural and man made factors, such as earthquakes, erosion, improper siting, rapidly rising flood waters and structural/ design flaws. A dam failure can cause loss of life, damage to property, and other hazards, as well as the displacement of persons residing in Los Banos in the path of the inundation.

Such a catastrophic dam failure could exceed the capability of the City of Los Banos to provide emergency response services. Coordination with other local, state, and federal agencies would be necessary to provide for damage control and disaster relief. Often called "mutual aid", this assistance could include mass evacuation, search and rescue operations, emergency medical care, food distribution, and temporary shelter for injured or displaced persons. State and Federal assistance could be required and may continue for an extended period of time. Merced County Office of Emergency Services has prepared a Multi-Hazard Functional Plan to address such emergencies. The County Office of Emergency Services is the centralized emergency response agency responsible for organizing and directing emergency services and disaster programs in the County. This agency receives updated dam inundation information from the State Office of Emergency Services and is responsible for identifying emergency evacuation routes.

Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale		Table HZ-2
I	Not felt except by very few under specially favorable circumstances.	
II	Felt only by a few persons at rest, especially on upper floors of buildings. Delicately suspended objects may swing.	
III	Felt quite noticeably indoors, especially on upper floors of buildings, but many people do not recognize it as an earthquake. Standing cars may rock slightly. Vibration like passing truck.	
IV	During the day, felt indoors by many, outdoors by few. At night, some awakened. Dishes, windows, doors disturbed; walls make creaking sound. Sensation like heavy truck striking building. Standing cars rocked noticeably.	
V	Felt by nearly everyone, many awakened. Some dishes, windows, etc., broken; a few instances of cracked plaster; unstable objects overturned. Disturbance of trees, poles, and other tall objects sometimes noticed. Pendulum clocks may stop.	
VI	Felt by all, many frightened and run outdoors. Some heavy furniture moved; a few instances of falling plaster or damaged chimneys. Damage slight.	
VII	Everybody runs outdoors. Damage negligible in buildings of good design and construction; slight to moderate in well-built ordinary structures; considerable in poorly built or badly designed structures; some chimneys broken. Noticed by persons driving cars.	
VIII	Damage slight in specially designed structures; considerable in ordinary, substantial buildings, with partial collapse; great in poorly built structures. Panel walls thrown out of frame structures. Fall of chimneys, factory stacks, columns, monuments, walls. Heavy furniture overturned. Sand and mud ejected in small amounts. Changes in well water. Persons driving cars disturbed.	
IX	Damage considerable in specially designed structures; well-designed, frame structures thrown out of plumb; great in substantial buildings, with partial collapse. Buildings shifted off foundations. Ground cracked conspicuously. Underground pipes broken.	
X	Some well-built wooden structures destroyed; most masonry and frame structures destroyed with their foundations; ground badly cracked. Rails bent. Landslides considerable from river banks and steep slopes. Shifted sand and mud. Water splashed (slopped) over basins.	
XI	Few, if any, (masonry) structures remain standing. Bridges destroyed. Broad fissures in ground. Underground pipelines completely out of service. Earth slumps and land slips in soft ground. Rails bent greatly.	
XII	Damage total. Waves seen on ground surfaces. Lines of sight and level distorted. Objects thrown upward into air.	



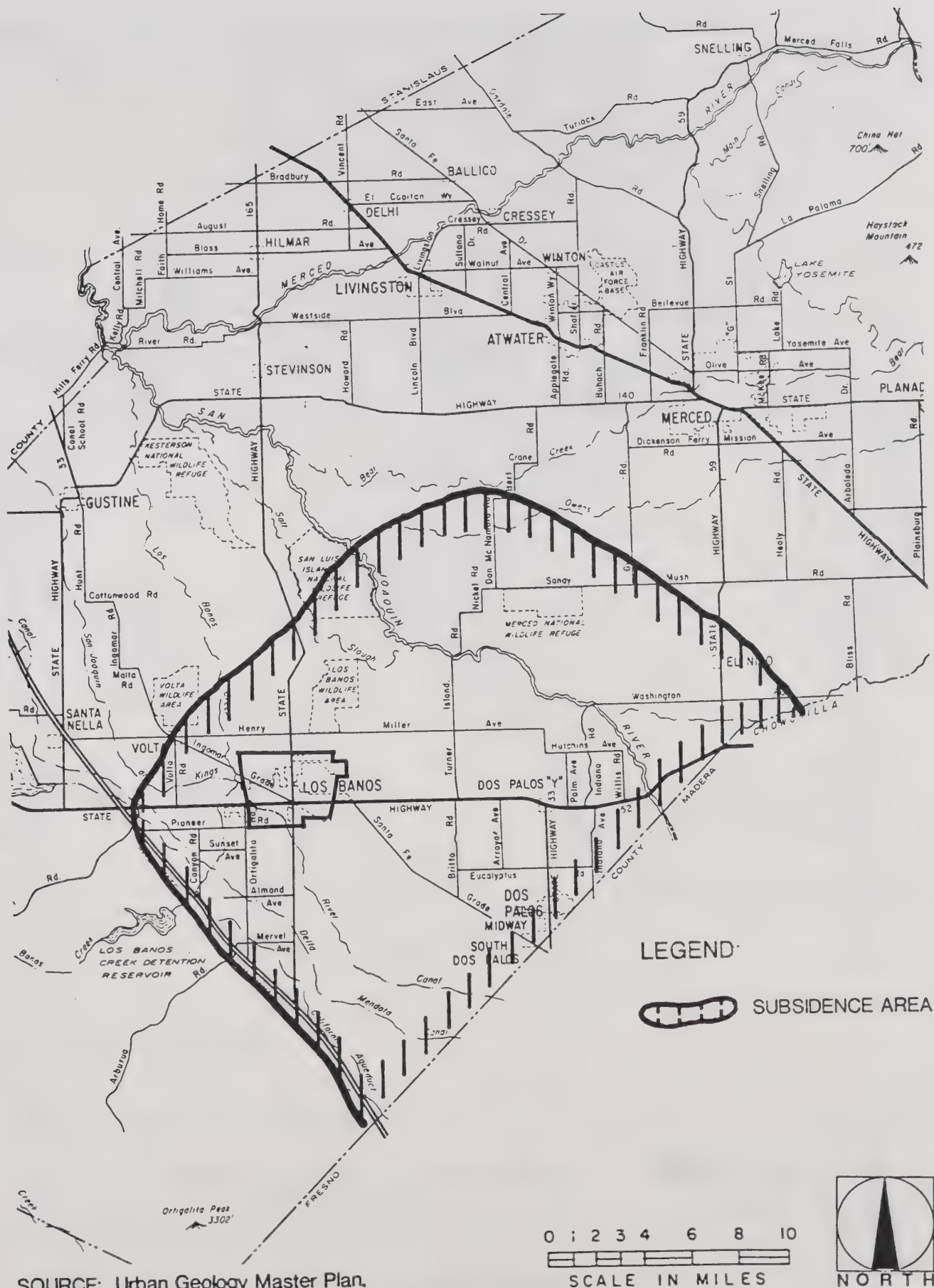
LEGEND

- County line
- Fault line

SOURCE: California Division of Mines & Geology- 1971

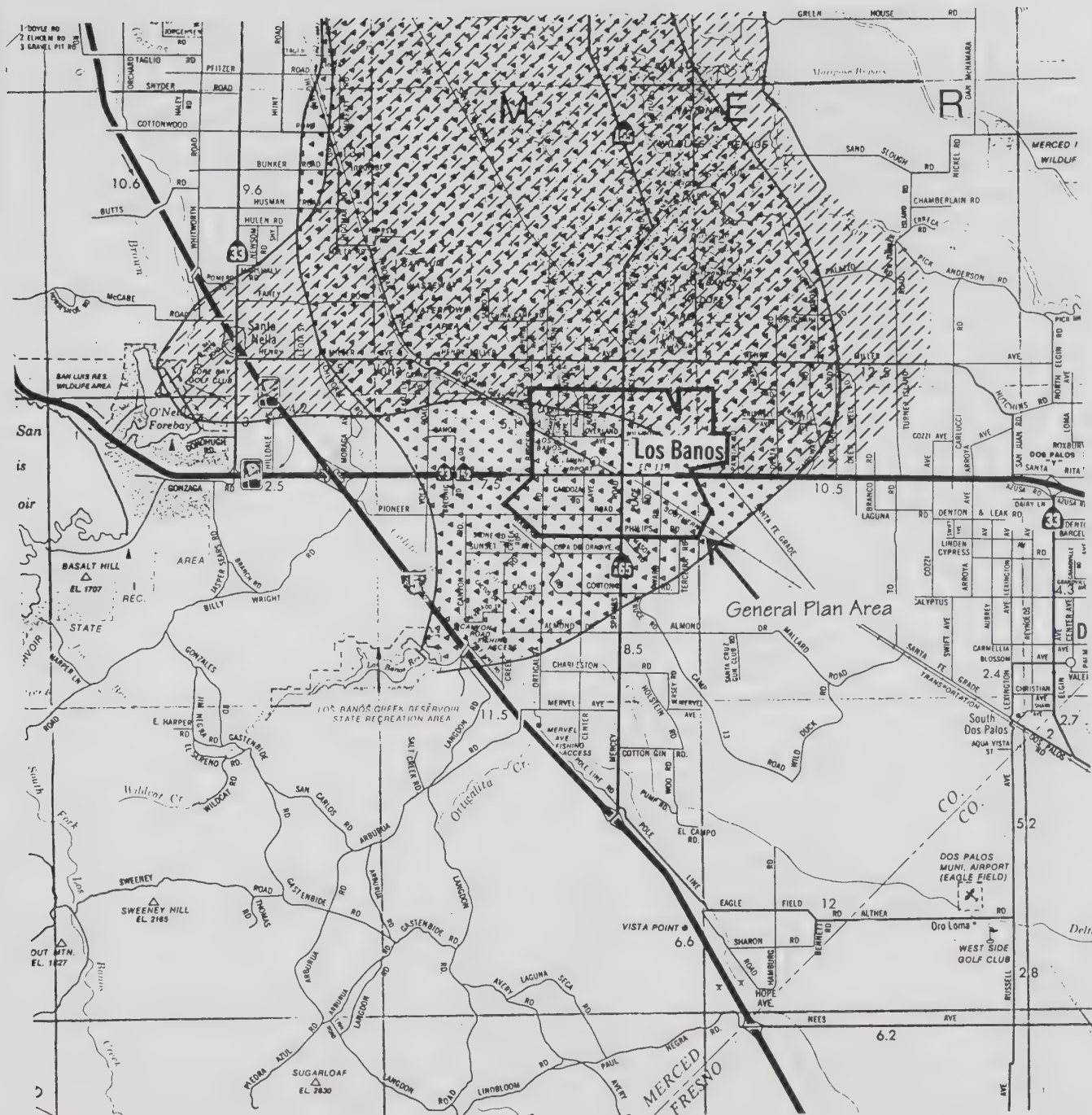


Figure HZ-1: Geologic Faults



SOURCE: Urban Geology Master Plan,
California Division of Mines and Geology, 1973

Figure HZ-2: Subsidence Map



San Luis Reservoir

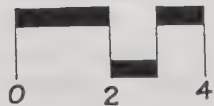


Los Banos Detention Reservoir

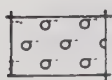
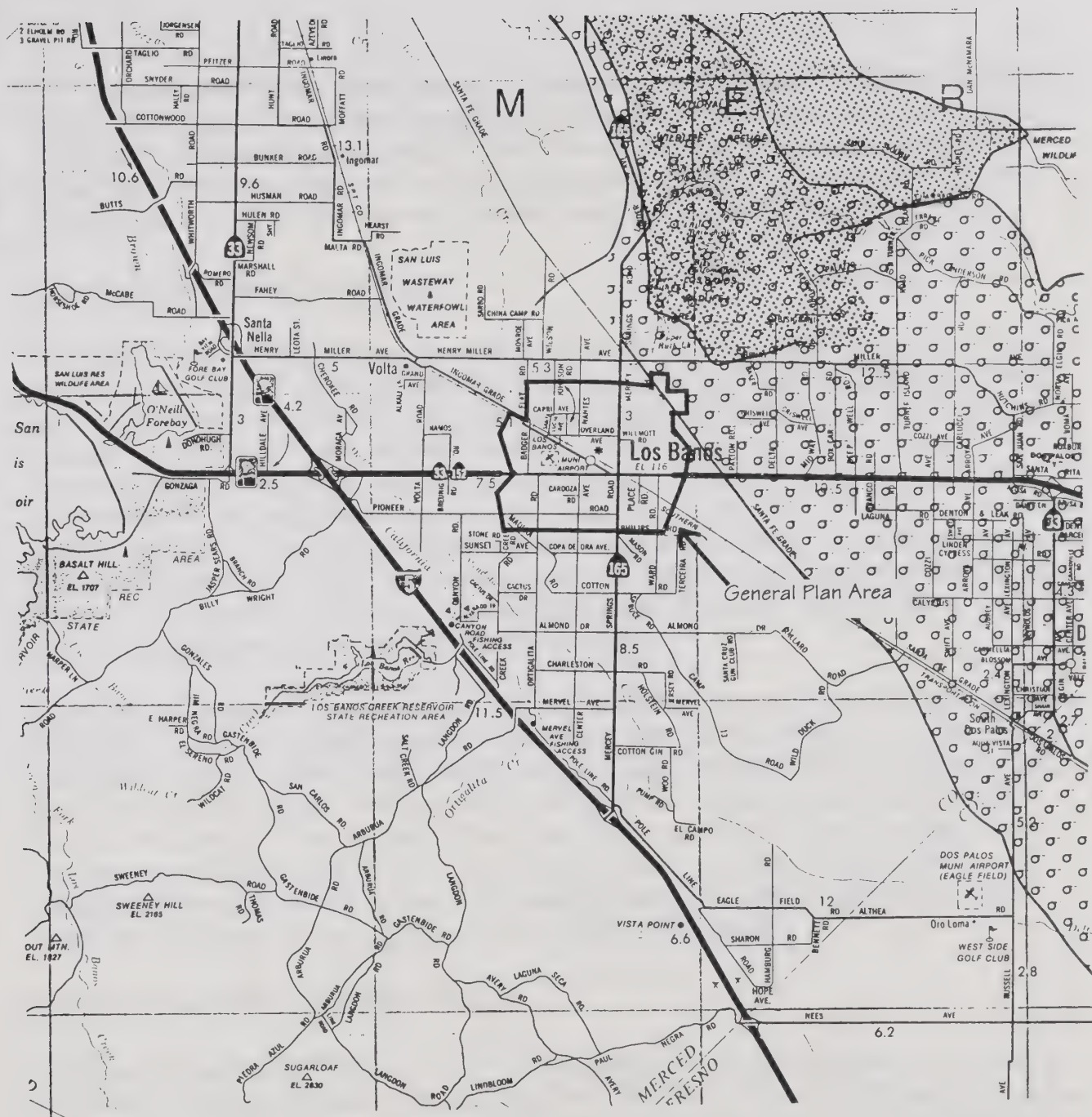
Source for Flood information: Merced Irrigation District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Feb. 1987

Basemap Source: Stoddard & Associates

Scale in Miles



San Luis Reservoir &
Figure HZ-3: Los Banos Creek Detention Reservoir Area of Flood Inundation



Little Panoche Reservoir



McClure Reservoir

Source for Flood information: Merced Irrigation District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Feb. 1987

Basemap Source: California State Automobile Association

Scale in Miles

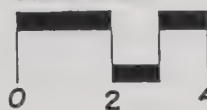


Figure HZ-4: Little Panoche Reservoir & McClure Reservoir Area of Flood

The San Luis Dam was constructed in an area of known seismic activity (Ortogonal Fault). The dam structure was constructed to withstand a magnitude 8.3 occurrence, however, this does not completely eliminate the possibility of dam failure and the resulting inundation. Dams are regularly inspected by the State Department of Water Resources, and all dams in Merced County have been judged to be safe.

LOS BANOS EMERGENCY PLAN

Merced County Office of Emergency Services Multi-Hazard Functional Plan identifies evacuation routes on a county-wide basis, which effects the City of Los Banos. This plan makes assumptions about the rate that people will evacuate an area of crisis, the specific route of travel, and ultimate destinations of those people. Given those assumptions it is likely that freeways, state highways, and major County roads will be the primary emergency evacuation routes. Those routes affecting the City of Los Banos are Highways 152 and 165, and Henry Miller Avenue. Many of the evacuation routes are state highways, and as such are regulated by the California Highway Patrol. In the County's Crisis Relocation Plan, traffic control points have been established to assist in directing people away from potential hazard areas.

The City of Los Banos has developed its own internal emergency response system and hierarchy. The Los Banos Municipal Code designates the City Manager as Director of Emergency Service. The Plan presents detailed responsibilities for key departmental positions and includes procedures and information for contacting staff that is not on duty at the time of the emergency. The Emergency Plan does not address specific emergency situations, rather, it provides the framework for coordinating efforts throughout the City staff to provide the greatest level of assistance, guidance, and support to the community in response to a catastrophic event.

HAZARDOUS WASTES & MATERIALS

Pursuant to California State Law, AB 2948, Merced County has prepared and adopted a County Hazardous Waste Management Plan (CHWMP). The CHWMP was developed in compliance with the many Federal, State, and local government laws and regulations which apply to management of hazardous waste Treatment, Storage, and Disposal (TSD) facilities.

Overall, Merced County is not a major producer of hazardous waste, due mainly to the limited industrial development which has occurred within the County to date. The Chemical Waste Management - Kettleman Hills facility provides adequate current capacity and sufficient projected capacity for management of Merced County's hazardous waste stream (CHWMP). However, consistent with AB2948, the CHWMP has identified general areas within the County where a TSD facility may be sited. Merced County's current intent is to site TSD facilities only in heavy industrial or general agriculture zones as a conditional use if certain criteria can be met. The broad siting criteria include review for:

- ☐ **High Hazard Areas** - Seismic; floodplains; wetlands; habitat of endangered species; soils stability; major recharge areas for aquifers.
- ☐ **Public Safety** - Distance for residences; distance from immobile populations; proximity to major transportation routes; public health and safety benefit to the County.
- ☐ **Physical Limitations of the Site Area** - Permeable strata and soil; non-attainment air quality areas; prime agricultural lands; depth of groundwater.
- ☐ **Location-Specific Criteria** - Proximity to public facilities; proximity to waste generation streams; industrial, commercial and specially zones lands; recreation cultural and aesthetic areas; mineral resources areas, military lands; other State, and Federal lands.

Transportation of Hazardous Wastes

Transportation is among the greatest risks associated with hazardous waste management programs. The City of Los Banos is served by Highway 152 which bisects the City from east to west. Highway 152 is a designated route for the transportation of hazardous waste provided State permits are issued to the hauler. As with any transportation route, there is a significant potential risk that vehicle accidents could occur and possibly subject the Los Banos community to a transportation related hazardous waste incident.

The CHWMP seeks to minimize the risk of transportation related incident through designating routes for hazardous waste transport. At present, the CHWMP only indicates that transport should occur on the most major road possible. Roadways are defined in a three-tier classification of minor roads, arterial or collector roads and state and interstate routes. The CHWMP suggests that transport should be maximized on the highest tier roads, or highways and freeways, and minimized on the lowest tier, or minor roads, to the extent feasible. Additional considerations of overall safety and economy of routes will be considered in designating specific transport routes. In cooperation with the Cities and California Highway Patrol Merced County has designated specific routes for transport of hazardous wastes.

Aerial Spray Operations

An area of special concern regarding hazardous materials is the aerial spraying of agricultural crops. This method of application requires regular washing and rinsing of tanks after applications. Over the years, residues have accumulated and toxic problems have developed. Currently, City of Los Banos policy does not allow aerial operators based at the Los Banos airport to wash or rinse tanks at the airport. The long range solution for this situation may be to develop special facilities for the disposal of this waste.

Site Specific Hazards

Site specific hazardous material locations may exist within the Los Banos Planning Area which have not yet been identified. Laws and regulations for handling hazardous materials and waste, as well as a broadening definition of hazardous materials has occurred within the past 10 years. Past practices of material disposal now could define certain areas as hazardous material locations and require regulated clean up. These locations may range from farming operations to industrial sites and as Los Banos grows some of these potential sites may be converted to new uses which will disturb soils potentially containing hazardous materials and have the potential of exposing residents to these hazards. As part of the development approval process the importance of site assessments, especially where the presence of potentially hazardous materials is suspected, can not be overlooked. Many lending institutions now require a "Preliminary Site Assessment" (PSA) as part of their due diligence in making development loans. The City, as part of its development approval process, may also require a PSA as part of the initial environmental assessment to ensure that potentially hazardous conditions do not exist, or to trigger additional study to abate conditions where they do exist.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Safety Element also includes urban and wildland fire considerations. Generally, Los Banos is free from major wildland fire hazards because of the amount of agricultural operations surrounding the City. Among the important issues with regard to fire safety and suppression is the placement of fire stations within a reasonable response to urban uses in the City. Accompanying the adequate equipment and strategic location of fire stations, is the need to provide for adequate fire flow in water systems (including fire hydrants) and adequate standards for roadway access to serve fire equipment. Other issues relate to transportation and storage of hazardous or potentially hazardous materials. Public safety concerns often surface while considering canals, street lighting, perimeter security lighting, pedestrian trails and paths, and overall law enforcement level-of-service in the City. This is particularly important with the consistency required between the City's Capital Improvement Program and the General Plan where new or expanded public facilities are programmed.

Fire Services

Personnel and Future Demand

The Los Banos Fire Department currently operates with five full-time staff members; Fire Chief, Fire Prevention/Fire Captain, an Engineer and two fire fighters, plus one Lead Fire Clerk. Fire Dispatch is handled through the Los Banos Police Department.

The Fire Department forecasts the need for a full-time fire department when the population of the City reaches 20,000. Currently there are 35 volunteer fire fighters and it is anticipated that a ratio of about 1 volunteer for every 500 population would be maintained.

Service Locations and Future Demand

The City of Los Banos is currently served by two fire stations; Station 1 located at 333 - 7th Street and Station 2 located at 1150 West I Street. Station service areas are designed to allow for an approximate five to six minute response time which is the acceptable standard for the City of Los Banos. Most of the existing City falls within the five minute response time contour from the current stations, however continued growth to the east and south will place that development outside of acceptable response time contours. The number and kind of vehicles available to the Fire Department will substantially depend on the type of development occurring in the City. An additional factor is the age of current equipment and the need to replace this older equipment with modern fire fighting apparatus. Additional fire fighting equipment will be required as urban growth expands in the City. A new station will be needed to the east of Highway 165. The location of the future stations can be determined by the response time contours from existing stations for urban development. The desired response time to urban development is 5 to 6 minutes. This roughly equates to a station with an overlapping service radius of 1.5 miles.

Project Development Review

The Planning Department refers appropriate project applications to the Fire Department for review and comment. This review includes topics such as access, alarm systems, need for on-site suppression systems (sprinklers), addressing locations, hydrant location, etc.. Comments and recommendations of the Los Banos Fire Department are forwarded to the Planning Department for inclusion as development conditions.

Service to Unincorporated Areas

The Merced County Fire Department/California Division of Forestry provides services to the unincorporated area surrounding the City. Given the level of urban development and the uncertainty of boundaries near the City limits, a joint response including City Fire Department is typical. Actual responsibility is determined at the scene.

Police Services

Personnel and Future Demand

The Los Banos Police Department currently operates out of a single station located at 945 Fifth Street. Space at this facility is marginal for current programs and community demands, and offers little room for expansion training and report writing activities. To meet increasing needs of the police services as growth continues in Los Banos, additional sworn officers and support staff will be required. The current level-of-service is about 1.35 police officers per 1,000 population. This level-of-service could be maintained with additional officers, and additional services required from a growing population could be provided by volunteer programs for non-police functions such as bicycle licensing, dog license violations, and vehicle abatement. However, expanding

personnel, whether sworn officers or volunteers, requires significant capital investment for equipment such as vehicles, law enforcement supplies, and office space. The City will have to investigate the expansion or relocation of the existing building in the next five years.

The Police Department dispatches both for police and fire services.

Community Programs

The Police Department provides cooperative educational programs for the Los Banos School District. At the Elementary and Junior High levels, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) is aimed at reducing and avoiding drug abuse problems at an early age.

Development Project Review

The Planning Department refers appropriate project applications to the Police Department for review and comment. This review includes topics such as lighting, alarm systems, and access. Comments and recommendations of the Police Department are forwarded to the Planning Department for inclusion as development conditions.

Service to Unincorporated Areas

The Merced County Sheriff's Department is responsible for law enforcement within the unincorporated areas surrounding the City of Los Banos. In the event that the Sheriff's Department requires assistance or is unable to respond, the Police Department will dispatch officers as needed, per request of the Sheriff's Department watch supervisor. The Sheriff's Department has full law enforcement authority in the unincorporated areas of Merced County, and the California Highway Patrol has full traffic enforcement responsibility in unincorporated areas of the County.

LOS BANOS AIRPORT

The Los Banos Airport Master Plan is under preparation and will address airport activity through the year 2010. The General Plan assumes that the existing airport noise contours will not expand significantly beyond current limits.

NOISE

Noise is usually defined as unwanted sound. It consists of any sound that may produce physiological or psychological damage and/or interfere with human communication, work, rest, recreation, and sleep. People recognize that noise has become an environmental pollutant that threatens our quality of life. In this way, it is a form of energy waste from human activities.

Land use compatibility with noise is an important consideration in the planning and design process. Some land uses are more susceptible to noise intrusion than others, depending on the nature of activities expected with that use. For instance, at educational facilities it is important to concentrate and to communicate. An interior noise level in excess of 50 dBA may interfere with these activities. Similarly, interference with sleep may occur at 45 dBA, so residential land use standards must reflect this noise level.

Some land uses are more tolerant of noise than others. These uses typically include activities that generate loud noise levels or those that do not require verbal interaction, concentration, or sleep. Commercial and retail facilities require very little speech communication and therefore are generally allowed noisier environments. Some industrial areas generate loud noises that would interfere more with communication than all but the highest exterior noise levels. Although construction activities associated with public works projects or private development occur throughout the City, they are generally localized and temporary.

In 1987, the City of Los Banos adopted a revised Noise Element of the General Plan. This Element was based on field noise studies and theoretical noise model projections of noise to the year 2005 in the City. This revision to the General Plan will not duplicate that work, but will improve on the organization of policies and objectives of that Element.

The major noise sources of concern are Highways 152 and 165, and the Los Banos Airport. The 1987 Noise Element also listed the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) facilities in the City as a noise source. Since the publication of the 1987 Noise Element, UPRR has abandoned railroad operations in the City, and the City intends to acquire the right-of-way for park and non-vehicular transportation purposes. As the City builds out, traffic will increase on arterial and collector streets. As this traffic increases so will the noise associated with the traffic. As ambient noise increases, additional means of mitigating noise impacts on residents will be required. The most common means of mitigation include additional set-backs, noise barriers, and insulation.

Table HZ-3 below is based on the 1987 Noise Element and studies. This table is supported by a noise contour map shown in Figure HZ-5. The projected noise contours for Highways 152 and 165 are shown. These contours do not consider noise attenuation measures such as walls or berms used to mitigate noise impacts for adjacent uses. Installation of noise barriers will substantially reduce the impact of traffic noise and potentially allow noise sensitive uses to be placed closer to the source of the noise based on site specific studies.

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Noise Level Estimates on Major Roads/Streets Year 2020		Table HZ-3	
Road/Street Description	Feet to Ldn Contours, from Center Line of Road		
	65 dB	60 dB	
SR 152 - Pacheco Boulevard			
West of SR 165 (35 mph)	100	190	
East of SR 165 (45 mph)	90	180	
SR 165 - Mercy Springs Road			
North of SR 152 (45 mph)	110	190	
South of SR 152 (45 mph)	70	140	
City Streets where projected noise contours extend beyond right-of-way			
Overland Avenue (west of SR 165)	r/w	70	
Seventh Street (north of H St.)	40	95	
West "I" Street (north of Pacheco Blvd.)	40	90	
West "I" Street (south of Pacheco Blvd.)	r/w	60	
Pioneer Road	70	150	
Ward Road	70	150	
Johnson Road	r/w	70	
"B" Street	r/w	60	
San Luis Street	40	90	

Note: r/w = right-of-way limits

Source: Valley Planning Consultants, 1997

Figure HZ-6 is provided as a reference concerning the sensitivity of different land uses to their noise environment. It is intended to illustrate the range of noise levels which will allow the full range of activities normally associated with a given land use. For example, exterior noise levels in the range of 50-60 dB L_{dn} (as CNEL) are generally considered acceptable for residential land uses, since these levels will usually allow normal outdoor and indoor activities such as sleep and communication to occur without interruption. Industrial facilities, however, can be relatively insensitive to noise and may generally be located in a noise environment of up to 75 dB L_{dn} (or CNEL) without significant adverse effects. Specific noise compatibility criteria in terms of L_{dn} or CNEL for residential and noise sensitive land uses within the City of Los Banos are defined in policy section of this chapter.

The Los Banos Airport also provides a source for noise in the community. Restrictive land uses will reduce the impact of future noise sensitive uses near the airport. There

are no plans to relocate the airport. The noise contours shown in Figure HZ-5, constitute approximately 28,000 annual aircraft operations.

In the 1987 Noise Element industrial and other stationary sources of noise were analyzed. The Element indicated that industrial noise control issues focus on two objectives: to prevent the introduction of new noise-producing uses in a noise sensitive area, and to prevent encroachment of noise-sensitive land uses into existing industrial facilities or other stationary sources. A survey of stationary noise sources and impacts was prepared for the 1987 Noise Element. The operational characteristics of industrial sources has not changed since 1987.

The Policies and Programs contained in the Noise Element, as well as those contained in the Land Use, Circulation, and Open Space and Conservation Element will ensure that noise will be at an acceptable and safe level throughout the City.

AIR QUALITY

Los Banos's air quality is affected by development which occurs within its boundaries, but more significantly by the balance of activities within the San Joaquin Valley. Improvement to air quality is a regional, state, and national problem and all of the various levels of government must work together to achieve an integrated set of policies and programs to address elements of the problem. Progress has been made since the 1960s when emission control efforts began. Regulations on vehicle emissions and industrial sources have improved air quality, but standards for several pollutants are still frequently exceeded in the San Joaquin Valley. Even the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District (SJVUAPCD) can not predict when state or federal standards will be achieved even with new technologies and new control measures expected in the next few years. Local air quality programs that reduce vehicle trips and miles traveled can be a significant source of emission reductions. For this reason, the 1991 Air Quality Attainment Plan for the San Joaquin Valley includes a control measure to encourage cities and counties to adopt air quality elements.

The land use design, circulation system, and open space and conservation approach pursued in the Los Banos General Plan makes a clear statement of commitment to take action toward improving air quality and emphasizes public transit accessibility, pedestrian facilities, and bicycling as a recreational activity. Objectives, policies, and programs contained in these General Plan Elements support and implement most of the SJVUAPCD air quality recommendations and are designated with **AQ** in parenthesis behind the Objective, Policy or Program. For a complete listing of the Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs designed to implement the model Air Quality Element, please see Appendix B of the General Plan.

LAND USE CATEGORY	COMMUNITY NOISE EXPOSURE L ₅₀ OR CNEL, dB					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
RESIDENTIAL - LOW DENSITY SINGLE FAMILY, DUPLEX, MOBILE HOMES						
RESIDENTIAL - MULTIFAMILY						
TRANSIENT LODGING - MOTELS, HOTELS						
SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES, CHURCHES, HOSPITALS, NURSING HOMES						
AUDITORIUMS, CONCERT HALLS, AMPHITHEATRES						
SPORTS ARENA, OUTDOOR SPECTATOR SPORTS						
PLAYGROUNDS, NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS						
GOLF COURSES, RIDING STABLES, WATER RECREATION, CEMETERIES						
OFFICE BUILDINGS, BUSINESS COMMERCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL						
INDUSTRIAL, MANUFACTURING UTILITIES, AGRICULTURE						

LEGEND



NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE

Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.



CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.



NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.



CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE

New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

CONSIDERATIONS IN DETERMINATION OF NOISE-COMPATIBLE LAND USE

A. NORMALIZED NOISE EXPOSURE INFORMATION DESIRED

Where sufficient data exists, evaluate land use suitability with respect to a "normalized" value of CNEL or L₅₀. Normalized values are obtained by adding or subtracting the constants described in Table 1 to the measured or calculated value of CNEL or L₅₀.

B. NOISE SOURCE CHARACTERISTICS

The land use-noise compatibility recommendations should be viewed in relation to the specific source of the noise. For example, aircraft and railroad noise is normally made up of higher single noise events than auto traffic but occurs less frequently. Therefore, different sources yielding the same composite noise exposure do not necessarily create the same noise environment. The State Aeronautics Act uses 65 dB CNEL as the criterion which airports must eventually meet to protect existing residential communities from unacceptable exposure to aircraft noise. In order to facilitate the purposes of the Act, one of which is to encourage land uses compatible with the 65 dB CNEL criterion wherever possible, and in order to facilitate the ability of airports to comply with the Act,

residential uses located in Community Noise Exposure Areas greater than 65 dB should be discouraged and considered located within normally unacceptable areas.

C. SUITABLE INTERIOR ENVIRONMENTS

One objective of locating residential units relative to a known noise source is to maintain a suitable interior noise environment at no greater than 45 dB CNEL of L₅₀. This requirement, coupled with the measured or calculated noise reduction performance of the type of structure under consideration, should govern the minimum acceptable distance to a noise source.

D. ACCEPTABLE OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

Another consideration, which in some communities is an overriding factor, is the desire for an acceptable outdoor noise environment. When this is the case, more restrictive standards for land use compatibility, typically below the maximum considered "normally acceptable" for that land use category, may be appropriate.

Source: California Department of Health, Guidelines for the Preparation and Content of Noise Elements of The General Plan, February 1976.

Figure HZ-6: Noise-Land Use Compatibility Chart

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GOAL

The Goal of the Hazards Element is to:

- ☐ Minimize the City of Los Banos' exposure to harmful impacts caused by natural or man made hazards and noise.

Public Safety

Objectives, Policies & Programs

OBJECTIVE HZ 1

Protect Los Banos from hazards associated with the natural environment.

POLICY HZ 1.1

Minimize risks of personal injury and property damage associated with natural hazards.

Program HZ 1.1-A

Participate in State and County programs to educate the residents on procedures regarding preparedness and response to natural disasters, providing information describing procedures and evacuation routes to be followed in the event of a disaster.

Program HZ 1.1-B

Design consideration shall be given for future evacuation routes as a component of the street construction and improvement programs of the City. The City shall coordinate its planning and design efforts with other agencies including Merced County Office of Emergency Services, California Highway Patrol, and Caltrans.

POLICY HZ 1.2

Mitigate potential adverse impacts of geologic and seismic hazards.

Program HZ 1.2-A

Where questionable conditions exist, require geologic and soils studies to identify potential hazards as part of the approval process for affected new development prior to grading activities.

Program HZ 1.2-B

Require that underground utilities be designed to withstand probable seismic forces to be encountered in Los Banos.

Program HZ 1.2-C

Continue to incorporate appropriate earthquake damage prevention design standards into the City's uniform building codes and require that all new structures be engineered to meet seismic safety code standards.

POLICY HZ 1.3

Minimize fire hazards within the Los Banos Planning Area.

Program HZ 1.3-A

The City shall determine the need for additional fire stations and equipment to maintain the five to six minute response time for fire suppression services. The determination should include estimates for and timing of projected growth and the location in the City that growth will take place. New development shall be responsible for providing improvement cost of land acquisition, facility construction, and equipment acquisition.

Program HZ 1.3-B

The City shall minimize the dependencies of new commercial, industrial, and mixed-use developments on fire fighting personnel and equipment by requiring on-site fire suppression systems, which include sprinklers and pumps, as necessary.

Program HZ 1.3-C

The City shall require property owners to remove fire hazards, structures, combustible materials and debris as directed by the Fire Department.

Program HZ 1.3-D

All new development shall be constructed according to the fire safety and structural standards contained in the latest adopted Uniform Building Code, Uniform Fire Code, and related regulations.

OBJECTIVE HZ 2

Protect the citizens of Los Banos and its environs from exposure to hazardous materials or waste.

POLICY HZ 2.1

For new projects, risks involving the disposal, transport, manufacture, storage and handling of hazardous material in Los Banos shall be evaluated in the project review process.

Program HZ 2.1-A

Coordinate with Merced County to provide educational opportunities for individuals who generate or handle small quantities of household and agricultural waste products regarding their responsibilities for source reduction and proper and safe hazardous waste management.

Program HZ 2.1-B

Adopt current versions of the Uniform Fire Code to regulate the storage of hazardous substances.

Program HZ 2.1-C

Restrict the storage of hazardous material in industrial areas which are located near sensitive receptors.

Program HZ 2.1-D (AQ)

Consider the emission of toxic air contaminants from existing facilities when siting new sensitive receptors near such a source. Where appropriate, consultation and coordination with SJVUAPCD shall be undertaken.

Program HZ 2.1-E

Coordinate with the California Highway Patrol to maintain designated travel routes through the Los Banos Area for vehicles transporting hazardous materials.

Program HZ 2.1-F

Coordinate with the Merced County Health Department for the implementation of the Hazardous Material Disclosure Law.

Program HZ 2.1-G (AQ)

Identify potential users and producers of hazardous materials at the time of permit application and mitigate dangers associated with these materials. Where appropriate, consultation and coordination with SJVUAPCD shall be undertaken.

Program HZ 2.1-H (AQ)

Land uses using, storing or producing hazardous materials shall be located at a safe distance from other uses that may be adversely affected by such activities. Sensitive receptors such as schools, hospitals, day care centers, convalescent homes, and other immobile populations shall be considered during the review process. Where appropriate, consultation and coordination with SJVUAPCD shall be undertaken.

OBJECTIVE HZ 3

Provide high quality emergency services to protect life and property in the City of Los Banos.

POLICY HZ 3.1

Provide for efficient and cost effective fire and emergency medical service to minimize potential injury, loss or destruction to persons or property.

Program HZ 3.1-A

Continue with an intensive weed abatement program to minimize fire hazards near urban uses.

Program HZ 3.1-B

Potential fire hazards shall be identified in project review and shall be mitigated to an acceptable level.

Program HZ 3.1-C

To the extent feasible the City shall maintain Fire Marshall inspection services to ensure that new and remodel construction complies with Fire Code requirements, and that commercial and industrial buildings are meeting minimum fire prevention and safety requirements.

Program HZ 3.1-D

Maintain mutual aid agreements with Merced County, California Department of Forestry, and other nearby cities including the City of Gustine and the City of Dos Palos.

Program HZ 3.1-E

Maintain emergency fire dispatch services at an acceptable level and to the extent feasible maintain mutual aid communication channels with Merced County.

POLICY HZ 3.2

Implement the Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Program HZ 3.2-A

Update the Emergency Preparedness Plan annually to respond to changes in land use, population and incorporated city boundaries, including: evacuation routes; location of critical facilities; peak load water supply requirements; minimum road widths and turning radii; and identification of the population at risk.

Program HZ 3.2-B

Coordinate with Merced County, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Office of Emergency Services in reducing community risk in the event of a disaster through Emergency Preparedness Plan preparation and disaster drills.

Program HZ 3.2-C

Coordinate City evacuation routes with Merced County's Office of Emergency Services Multi-Hazard Functional Plan.

Program HZ 3.2-D

Ensure that public and private water facilities have adequate capacity to supply emergency needs.

POLICY HZ 3.3

Promote community order by preventing criminal activity, enforcing laws, and meeting community police service demands.

Program HZ 3.3-A

Maintain the 911 emergency system, and promote Neighborhood Watch systems and similar crime prevention activities and programs through schools and community organizations.

Program HZ 3.3-B

Design public and private spaces to minimize opportunities for criminal activity.

Program HZ 3.3-C

Maintain mutual aid agreements with Merced County and neighboring County law enforcement agencies and the California Highway Patrol.

Program HZ 3.3-D

Law enforcement hazards shall be identified in project review and shall be prevented or mitigated to an acceptable level.

POLICY HZ 3.4

Facility and equipment needs of the Los Banos Fire Department and Police Department shall be considered in the review of new development and mitigated to an acceptable level.

Program HZ 3.4-A

Requirements for additional fire stations and equipment shall be considered in Capital Improvement Programs and development fees.

Program HZ 3.4-B

Requirements for expanded police department facilities and equipment shall be considered in Capital Improvement Programs and development impact fees.

OBJECTIVE HZ 4

Protect the safety of persons on the ground from aircraft crash hazard potentials, and protect the safety of aircraft in flight.

POLICY HZ 4.1

Los Banos shall participate in the development of an Airport Master Plan for the Los Banos Airport.

Program HZ 4.1-A

Continue to work with the Federal Aviation Administration and the California Division of Aeronautics to prepare and implement the Los Banos Airport Master Plan and associated environmental documents.

Program HZ 4.1-B

Acquire land to implement the Airport Master Plan as necessary.

POLICY HZ 4.2

Los Banos shall participate in the development of an Airport Land Use Plan for the environs of the Los Banos Airport.

Program HZ 4.2-A

The Land Use Element of the Los Banos General Plan and the Los Banos Zoning Ordinance shall be used to restrict potentially hazardous land uses from being established within Clear Zones B-1 and B-2 of the Merced County Airport Land Use Plan as adopted by the City Los Banos and implemented in the Los Banos General Plan Land Use Element. See the Land Use Element for specific land use policies and programs relating to the Los Banos Airport Clear Zone.

POLICY HZ 4.3

The Merced County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan is incorporated by reference into the City of Los Banos General Plan. Where requirements of the Merced County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan and the City of Los Banos General Plan differ, the more restrictive requirements shall apply.

OBJECTIVE HZ 5

Minimize risks of personal injury associated with potential hazards in the man made environment.

POLICY HZ 5.1

Public safety hazards associated with irrigation canals and drainage areas shall be minimized by fencing or restricting access.

Program HZ 5.1-A

Establish design criteria for publicly accessible irrigation facilities, slough remnants, detention basins and drainage facilities to minimize potential for accidents and injury.

Program HZ 5.1-B

Participate with canal owners and operators to ensure that City operated facilities have properly located hazard warning signs.

OBJECTIVE HZ 6

Protect the residents of Los Banos from the harmful and annoying effect of excessive noise and protect the City's economic base by preventing incompatible land uses from encroaching upon existing or planned noise-producing uses.

POLICY HZ 6.1

Ground transportation noise: The compatibility of proposed projects with existing and future noise levels due to ground transportation noise sources shall be evaluated in relation to Table HZ-4. Noise levels in outdoor activity areas and interior spaces shall be mitigated to the levels shown in Table HZ-4.

Maximum Allowable Noise Exposure to Ground Transportation Noise Sources			Table HZ-4
Land Use	Outdoor Activity Areas ¹	Interior Spaces	
	$L_{dn}/CNEL, dB$	$L_{dn}/CNEL, dB$	L_{eq}, dB^2
Residential	60 ³	45	
Transient lodging	60 ³	45	
Hospitals, nursing homes	60 ³	45	
Theaters, auditoriums, music halls			35
Churches, meeting halls	60 ³		40
Office buildings			45
Schools, libraries, museums			45
Playgrounds, neighborhood parks	70		

Notes:

Source: Brown-Buntin Associates 1991.

¹ Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown, the exterior noise-level standard shall be applied to the property line of the receiving land use.

² As determined for a typical worst-case hour during periods of use.

³ Where it is not possible to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas to 60 db $L_{dn}/CNEL$ or less using a practical application of the best-available noise reduction measures, an exterior noise level of up to 65 db $L_{dn}/CNEL$ may be allowed provided that available exterior noise-level reduction measures have been implemented and interior noise levels are in compliance with this table.

L_{dn} = Day-Night Average Sound Level

CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level

dB = Decibels

POLICY HZ 6.2

New equipment and vehicles purchased by the City of Los Banos shall comply with noise level performance standards consistent with the best available noise reduction technology.

POLICY HZ 6.3

The City shall require monitoring of compliance with the standards of the Noise Element after completion of projects where noise mitigation measures have been required.

POLICY HZ 6.4

The Los Banos Police Department shall actively enforce the California Vehicle Code sections relating to adequate vehicle mufflers and modified exhaust systems.

POLICY HZ 6.5

Aircraft noise: All new land use proposals shall be evaluated against the land use policies of the Merced County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (MCALUP) as adopted by the City of Los Banos and implemented by the Los Banos General Plan Land Use Element.

Program HZ 6.5-A

All residential development shall be restricted to areas where outdoor noise levels are less than 65 dB CNEL and shall be prohibited in those areas which are greater than 65 dB CNEL except those areas that were designated for residential development prior to the adoption of the General Plan Noise Standards. In those areas, residential uses may be permitted within the 65 to 70 dBA CNEL Noise Contour, if the City Council makes findings of "special conditions" as that phrase is defined by the MCALUP.

POLICY HZ 6.6

Non-transportation noise: Noise created by non-transportation noise sources shall be mitigated so as not to exceed the interior and exterior noise level standards of Table HZ-5. Where proposed non-transportation noise sources are likely to produce noise levels exceeding the performance standards in Table HZ-5, an acoustical analysis shall be required as part of the environmental review process so that noise mitigation may be included in the project design.

POLICY HZ 6.7

Non-transportation noise: New development of noise sensitive land uses shall not be allowed where the noise level due to non-transportation noise sources will exceed the standards of Table HZ-5. Where noise sensitive land uses are proposed in areas exposed to existing or projected exterior non-transportation noise levels exceeding the performance standards of Table HZ-5, an acoustical analysis shall be required so that noise mitigation may be included in the project design.

POLICY HZ 6.8

All acoustical analyses required by the Hazards Management Element shall:

- ☐ Be the responsibility of the applicant;
- ☐ Be prepared by a qualified person experienced in the fields of environmental noise assessment and architectural acoustics;
- ☐ Include representative noise level measurements with sufficient sampling periods and locations to adequately describe local conditions;
- ☐ Estimate existing and projected (20 year) noise levels in terms of L_{dn} and/or the standards of Table HZ-5, and compare those levels to the policies of this Element;

Noise-Level Performance Standards for New Projects Affected By or Including Non-Transportation Sources **Table HZ-5**

		Exterior Noise-Level Standard (Applicable at Property Line)		Interior Noise-level Standard	
Land Use	Noise-Level Descriptor	Daytime 7am - 10pm	Nighttime 10pm - 7 am	Daytime 7am - 10pm	Nighttime 10pm - 7am
Residential	L_{eq}	50	45	40	35
	L_{max}	70	65	60	55
Transient lodging, hospitals, nursing homes	L_{eq}			40	35
	L_{max}			60	55
Theaters, auditoriums, music halls	L_{eq}			35	35
Churches, meeting halls	L_{eq}			40	40
Office buildings	L_{eq}			45	
Schools, libraries, museums	L_{eq}			45	
Playgrounds, parks	L_{eq}	65			

Notes:

Source: Brown-Buntin, 1991

Each of the noise levels specified above shall be lowered by 5 dB for simple tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or recurring impulsive noises. These noise-level standards do not apply to residential units established in conjunction with industrial or commercial uses (e.g., caretaker dwellings).

L_{eq} = Noise Equivalent Level

L_{max} = Maximum Noise Equivalent

- ☐ Recommend appropriate mitigation to achieve compliance with the adopted policies and standards of this Element. Where the noise source in question consists of intermittent single events, the report must address the effects of maximum noise levels in sleeping rooms in terms of possible sleep disturbance;
- ☐ Estimate noise exposure after the prescribed mitigation measures have been implemented; and
- ☐ Describe a post-project assessment program which could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures.

POLICY HZ 6.9

The City shall utilize procedures for project review and issuance of building permits to ensure that noise mitigation measures identified in an acoustical analysis are implemented in the project design.

POLICY HZ 6.10

The City shall purchase only equipment and vehicles which comply with noise level performance standards based upon the best available noise reduction technology.

POLICY HZ 6.11

The City shall require all development projects to mitigate noise impacts associated with construction activities.

OBJECTIVE HZ 7 (AQ)

Develop effective communication, cooperation, and coordination in establishing and operating community and regional air quality programs.

POLICY HZ 7.1 (AQ)

The City shall endeavor through the project review and environmental assessment process, to accurately determine and provide for fair and implementable mitigation measures for air quality impacts.

Program HZ 7.1-A (AQ)

The SJVUAPCD thresholds for ozone precursors ROG (reactive organic gases) and Nox (oxides of nitrogen) are 55lbs/day for each pollutant. Compliance with SJVUAPCD Regulation VIII (Fugitive Dust Prohibitions) will sufficiently reduce construction-related impacts. The city will apply SJVUAPCD control measures as appropriate as contained in the SJVUAPCD publication Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts.

Program HZ 7.1-B (AQ)

Where mitigation measures have been determined to be feasible and implementable, such measures may become recommended conditions of the project approval process.

Program HZ 7.1-C (AQ)

The City will work with other local governmental agencies on a regional basis to develop realistic and implementable basin-wide Air Quality Impact Assessment Guidelines that will provide standard criteria for determining significant environmental effects, a uniform method of calculating project emissions, and standard mitigation measures applicable to all cities.

Program HZ 7.1-D (AQ)

Among the environmental review mitigation measures or conditions for development are appropriate air quality mitigation measures recommended by the SJVUAPCD to reduce particulate emissions from construction, grading, and demolition.

Program HZ 7.1-E (AQ)

Through the environmental assessment and review process, the City will encourage developers to limit fireplace installations in new projects which do not

meet EPA Phase II standards. Natural gas, pellet stoves, or other devices which minimize emissions shall be encouraged.

Program HZ 7.1-F (AQ)

Assist the SJVUAPCD in implementing District Regulation VIII where appropriate.

POLICY HZ 7.2 (AQ)

Because air quality problems and solutions require regional cooperation and action, Los Banos will participate with neighboring and regional jurisdictions in coordinating air quality management programs.

Program HZ 7.2-A (AQ)

Once emissions thresholds are established by the SJVUAPCD, the City will consult with SJVUAPCD in the "early consultation process" as recommended by CEQA to determine a reasonable scope of air quality analysis for affected projects.

Program HZ 7.2-B (AQ)

Once the PM 10 emissions reduction program has been determined by the SJVUAPCD, the City of Los Banos will participate with other neighboring jurisdictions to implement those rules.

POLICY HZ 7.3 (AQ)

Los Banos will seek methods to integrate land use, circulation, and air quality planning with neighboring and regional jurisdictions.

[End of Hazards Element]

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

The Public Facilities and Services Element is an optional element of the General Plan designed to address the public physical and fiscal impacts associated with development. Public facilities covered in this element include police, fire, schools, general government, water, wastewater, storm drainage and solid waste. Recreation and open space facilities, such as parks, are addressed in the Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element. Public facilities related to transportation and circulation are addressed in the Circulation Element.

WATER SUPPLY

Los Banos currently relies on groundwater for domestic water supply. Deep wells above the Corcoran clay layer provide generally good water quality. Except for the urban depression cone caused by City pumping, water levels have remained relatively constant. Water quantity and quality limitations to the northeast of the Planning Area, and better supply and quality in the southwest, suggest that new wells should be developed in the southwest part of the Planning Area. Although there appears to be a good supply of groundwater toward the southwest, in order for the City to implement the Land Use Plan without significant effect on the groundwater supply, alternative water supply sources must be developed. One of the most readily available sources is surface water which can be supplied by local canal and irrigation districts through appropriate agreement or contracts. This potential source of domestic water should be seriously evaluated in the near future, and a plan developed to create storage and treatment facilities, or recharge facilities to accommodate the demand from new urban growth.

Agricultural wells are a major user of groundwater during dry years or when surface water irrigation supplies are not available. Development of a number of high production agricultural wells near the City for agricultural irrigation purposes could endanger the City's water supply. Some agricultural areas in the County, including smaller irrigation districts, rely completely on groundwater supplies in dry years. Surface water allocations to these districts and maintaining water rights for property owners within those districts are critical issues to the City seeking to maintain adequate water supply to serve the projected land use development in the Planning Area.

Groundwater Recharge

Although groundwater recharge is a primary concern, use of surface water in ponding basins as a recharge source may not be practical due to fine-grained deposits that overlie the permeable, coarse-grained strata of the upper aquifer. Deep injection wells

within the urban cone of depression are an alternative, but represent substantial cost in construction, water pre-treatment, operation and maintenance. The course of Los Banos Creek and Los Banos Reservoir represent the historic recharge area for the City and those areas should be protected and water supply maintained and enhanced if possible. A positive combination of goals are to preserve and expand the area used for recharge as public open space. This approach would provide a number of opportunities for joint use and funding of projects.

For the foreseeable future, water conservation measures will continue to be the primary method of minimizing domestic well pumping and keeping groundwater drawdowns associated with urban demand at manageable levels.

Water Quality

The City of Los Banos domestic water supply is considered of fair to good quality. The 1993 Water Quality Report provided by the Department of Public Works indicates that Los Banos meets or exceeds all minimum requirements for health-related and aesthetic standards set by the California Department of Health Services.

Domestic Water

Domestic water in the Los Banos area is provided by the City of Los Banos. The City of Los Banos Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining the existing wells and distribution system. The water function is operated as a municipal enterprise meaning that the revenue generated through user fees must be sufficient to meet operation, maintenance and capital costs replacement.

The City of Los Banos and surrounding urban areas utilize local groundwater to meet all domestic, commercial, and industrial water demands. The City currently pumps about 6,050 acre feet of water per year for domestic purposes. The typical residential demand is in the range of 150 gallons per day per person (the overall demand when considering all other water users in the City is about 240 gallons per day per capita). Water meters are required for all development in the City which is a positive factor in water conservation efforts. Currently there are about 6,800 connections, and all but approximately 100 are metered.

Water supply appears to be sufficient for the long term with the implementation of water recharge programs. Both urban growth and continued agricultural production near the City will increase the demand for groundwater and the need to participate in groundwater recharge activities. There are alternatives to groundwater supply such as obtaining domestic water from the California Aqueduct, treating and pipelining it to the City. The cost of obtaining this surface water appears far more expensive than continuing to use groundwater and engaging in groundwater recharge activities. The ultimate limiting constraint is the capacity of the aquifer. There are an estimated 90 agricultural wells using the same lowest aquifer above the corcoran clay layer as the City. Groundwater recharge efforts can assist in slowly renewing groundwater levels.

The City's long term development potential will depend on expanding and documenting knowledge of the aquifer and developing cooperative conservation efforts to bank water through recharge efforts. It may also be possible to use water of reduced mineral quality which exists below the corcoran clay layer by utilizing well head treatment.

Conservation will remain a priority for the foreseeable future. Reuse of treated wastewater for irrigation of open space is gaining popularity, but retrofitting existing developed areas to use reclaimed water is currently impractical. The cost effectiveness of satellite tertiary plants and/or construction of a separate reclaimed water distribution system must be evaluated against conservation programs and initial cost for new residential development and open space irrigation needs.

Distribution System

Los Banos' system consists of a looped water system using a minimum of six inch mains, with most larger mains at 10 inches. Growth of the system to serve new development will require continued looping of lines and expansion of fire flow reserve capacities. More water system modeling is necessary to determine weaknesses in the existing system, opportunities for additional storage, and the benefits and costs of interlinking the system. As the City grows, water well locations and distribution pipelines must be planned as part of an overall system. Such an approach will assist the City in developing cross-town pipelines and intermittent storage facilities, if necessary, to assure optimum quantity and quality of domestic water. This flexibility of water delivery, although costly, could support development in the southeast, north, and east where poorer water quality is encountered.

The City has adopted minimum fire flow requirements for residential, commercial, and industrial areas of the City. There are no major system constraints for future development. However, problems exist in older sections of the City with small four inch lines which are being addressed over time, through a retrofitting program. The City does not provide a significant number of domestic water connections outside of the City limits. Typically, if water service is requested by properties in the unincorporated territory and extension of service is feasible, the property will be required to be annexed to the City before services are provided. A surcharge is and may continue to be levied for connections outside the City limits.

The City's 11 wells operate by electrical power (backed up by diesel or natural gas engines). Five of these wells use natural gas engines daily during peak hours to take advantage of time-of-use electrical motors during off-peak hours. The City uses a 100,000 gallon elevated tank as a surge control facility.

In order for the City to utilize a surface source of water, extensive retrofitting and distribution system improvements would be necessary to provide service throughout the City. The capital costs of surface water alternatives should include the cost of upgrading the distribution system to adequately provide service throughout the City. Even though development and operation of a surface water supply would be more

expensive than groundwater supplies, availability of high quality groundwater may be questionable in the long-term. Accordingly the City is pursuing surface water rights/contracts to meet future needs.

Wastewater Treatment

The wastewater treatment plant underwent expansion to a capacity of 3.0 million gallons per day in 1991, which completed phase 1 of a multi-phase expansion program. Phase 2 will expand the treatment plant capacity to 4.5 million gallons per day, or about equivalent to 13,000 residential dwelling units. The plant currently provides wastewater treatment for about 6,500 residential units, as well as industrial and commercial users. The current design capacity of 3.0 million gallons per day (mgd) is sufficient for growth through the year 2000 or about another 1,500 dwelling units (most of which have already been approved as Tentative Subdivision Tract Maps).

The land currently used for wastewater treatment and disposal is located northeast of the City on approximately 985 acres. Additional land around the plant is owned by the City, some of which has been dedicated to wetlands. The property area is sufficient for expansion of the wastewater treatment plant.

Similar to the domestic water system, the Los Banos Public Works Department is the responsible City department for the operation and maintenance of both the treatment and collection system. The waste water system is operated as an enterprise function of the City.

Collection System

While the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant is not an immediate constraint to growth, the capacity of the collection and transportation system is a major constraint in some areas of the City's General Plan Area, particularly in the areas west of Ortigilita Road and east of Ward Road. Other areas which would require expansion of the sewer collection system lay north of the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way and west of the San Luis Canal, as well as south of Cardoza Road to Pioneer Road. Growth north of the proposed loop arterial street to the proposed Highway 152 by-pass will have to address significant sewer interceptor issues and connection routes to the waste water treatment plant. Options available to the City to solve the lack of capacity in the collection system include expansion and enlargement of the existing sewer collection system, or creation of satellite water reclamation plants. The City does not provide a significant number of domestic sewer connections outside of the City limits. Typically, if sewer service is requested by properties in the unincorporated territory and extension of service is feasible, the property will be required to annex to the City before services are provided. If services are provided outside of the City Limits, a surcharge is levied by the City for such service.

The wastewater collection system is basically a gravity system with lift stations as necessary. A gravity system is the most cost effective and energy conservative system

to operate. The City has prepared a Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (Nolte, 1981) which forms the basis of the City's implementation program to expand the sewer collection system. The elements and constituents of growth have caused the need for modifying the Master Plan to respond to changing conditions, however the basic elements remain. Because of these changes and the need to reflect the land use projections contained in this general plan, a new sewer collection master plan is necessary. This master plan should be a high priority in the next five years to accommodate projected growth beyond the capacity of the existing system. The present system can accommodate projected growth within the range projected in the General Plan in the short term. However, to accommodate build-out within the Planning Area of the City, additional new interceptors will be required. The growth rate assumptions and projected residential densities contained in the current Sanitary Sewer Master Plan are consistent with projections contained in this General Plan.

Satellite tertiary wastewater treatment systems which produce reclaimed water for irrigation of open space, or potentially certain agricultural crops, are another alternative to expansion of the sewer collection system. Strategic location of these plants, where there are cost advantages compared to installation of major sewer lines, can provide an alternative to the extension of sewer interceptors and provide a recycled source of irrigation water for extensive open space needs. When analyzing the cost effectiveness of such alternatives, especially where irrigation water demands are present, the on-going cost of irrigation water for open space should be part of the cost analysis. In addition, the economics of operating and staffing multiple facilities instead of a larger single facility should be taken into accord.

STORM WATER DRAINAGE

Collection of Storm Water

Storm water drainage is accomplished in the Planning Area through a system of storm water collection facilities which ultimately discharge into a number of canals owned and operated by irrigation or water districts. The rate of discharge into these canals is controlled through pumping, storage of run-off in detention basins or a combination of both. Typically, agreements or licenses are negotiated between the City and the owner of the canal for the limited discharge of drainage water into the facilities. In recent years, as the City and the districts have endeavored to meet water quality standards, the agreements for discharge of drainage water have been broadened to include water quality criteria for discharge into the canals, and also the annual renewal of many of the licenses or agreements. While these agreements may extend a number of years into the future, there may be modifications to water quality standards which may require the City to find alternatives for retention and disposal of drainage water in regional storm water basins as opposed to continued discharge into canals.

The City prepared a Storm Drainage Master Plan (Nolte, 1981) which described the retention and disposal facilities necessary to accommodate an additional 16,149 new residential units within the Master Plan's study area. This study area comprises a major

portion of the General Plan study area, and therefore, this study with amendments over time, forms the continuing basis for drainage infrastructure planning in the City. The Master Plan proposes collection and regional disposal facilities tied to an on-going relationship with canal districts for the ultimate discharge of drainage water. To accommodate build-out of planned growth and address the changing regulatory basis of the Federal Clean Water Act; and state requirements such as the inland surface waters plan, a new Master Drainage Plan should be prepared. Although the City may be exempted from compliance with Phase I of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System, the eventual implementation of Phase II of the program by the United States Department of Environmental Protection and state agencies could require Los Banos to begin addressing these standards. Updating the Drainage Master Plan to anticipate and prepare for discharge criteria changes will be essential to avoid substantial retrofitting of new systems.

Given the location of the proposed major basins and the limited knowledge of groundwater recharge potential of the soils in the vicinity of the basin, there is little benefit from these basins for groundwater recharge for City domestic water purposes. However, the potential for use of Los Banos Creek for groundwater recharge should not be overlooked in future drainage master plan studies to address proposed growth west of the current Drainage Master Plan study area.

The City of Los Banos Department of Public Works is responsible for implementing the Drainage Master Plan and maintaining the system. Unlike water and sewer services, drainage maintenance is not an enterprise function of the City. Typically, drainage maintenance funding is provided in new developments through the formation of drainage maintenance districts allowed for by California Law.

FIRE SERVICES

Personnel and Future Demand

The Los Banos Fire Department currently operates with five full-time staff; the Fire Chief, Fire Prevention Officer, an Engineer and two fire fighters, and a Lead Fire Clerk. The City benefits from an active volunteer department of 35 members which responds to fire calls on a routine basis. Fire Dispatch is handled through the Los Banos Police Department. One of the current objectives related to growth concerns is to evaluate whether a move toward a fully staffed fire department is appropriate when the City's population exceeds 20,000.

The number and kind of vehicles available to the Fire Department will substantially depend on the type of development occurring in the City. An additional factor is the age of current equipment and the need to replace older equipment with modern fire fighting apparatus. Additional fire fighting equipment will be required as urban growth demands new fire stations to be constructed. The Fire Department has attempted to establish a response time of five to six minutes in the placement of fire stations relative to existing and future growth (this roughly equates to 1.5 mile radius of stations with overlapping

response time contours, see Figure PF-1). The City has recently been rated by the Insurance Services Office at level 3. This rating is an improvement from level 5, and is a positive representation resulting from the construction of a second fire station and improvements to the City's water distribution system.

The City has established fire flow requirements for new development at 2,000 gallons per minute for residential units, and 3,500 gallons per minute for commercial and industrial land uses.

Service Locations and Future Demand

The City of Los Banos is currently served by two fire stations; Station No. 1 located at 333, 7th Street; and Station No. 2 is located at 1150, West I Street. These stations allow for an approximate five to six minute response time to developed areas which is the acceptable standard for the City of Los Banos. Growth of the City to the east or west will begin to place more development outside the acceptable response time contours. Based on population and area of growth considered by the Land Use Map, a minimum of two additional fire stations are needed to maintain acceptable standards. One future station should be located on the east side of the City central to the planned development in that area. Recent project proposals have included the development of such a station as a condition of development. An additional station on the west of the City near Badger Flat Road could provide adequate response time for that developing area. There is a potential for a third station to the north as long-term growth approaches the Highway 152 by-pass.

As the City continues to grow the need to provide additional equipment and fire stations will be essential to maintain adequate fire suppression capabilities. General Plan objectives and policies define the responsibility of new growth to address expansion of fire services.

Project Development Review

The Planning Department refers appropriate project applications to the Fire Department for review and comment. This review includes topics such as access, alarm systems, need for on-site suppression systems (sprinklers), address and location, hydrant location, etc. Comments and recommendations of the Fire Department are forwarded to the Planning Department for consideration and inclusion as development conditions.

Service to Unincorporated Areas

The Merced County Fire Department provides services to the unincorporated area surrounding the City. Given the level of urban development and the uncertainty of boundaries near the City limits, a joint response including City Fire Department is typical. Actual responsibility is determined at the scene.



LEGEND

- 1.) Main Station
- 2.) Station #2
- 3.) County Fire Department
- 4.) New Station
- 5.) New Station



Figure PF-1: Fire Response Time Radii

POLICE SERVICES

Personnel and Future Demand

The Los Banos Police Department currently operates out of a single station located at 945 5th Street. Expansion of the facility is needed to accommodate the increase in the number of police officers associated with growth in the City. Additional space is needed for training, investigative offices, and report writing areas for officers. Space is also needed for jail operations. The growth on the west side of the County has increased the demand on an antiquated holding cell area. This jail facility is cooperatively used by two counties for covering the needs of the west communities.

The City has acquired land west of the existing Police Department building for expansion of those facilities. A plan for the expansion of the existing facility is being prepared to accommodate continued growth in the City. As additional sworn officers are hired, additional support staff will also be required, including dispatch personnel and modern equipment. Maintaining the level-of-service of personnel requires significant capital expenditure for equipment such as vehicles, law enforcement supplies, and office space.

The Police Department dispatches both for police and fire services.

Los Banos Police Department established its first Outreach Center in 1997. This center functions as a outstation of Police Officers in the neighborhoods of the City.

The City has instituted Police Impact Fees for all new development to help off-set the City's capital costs of providing space and equipment for police services.

Development Project Review

The Planning Department refers appropriate project applications to the Police Department for review and comment. This review includes topics such as lighting, alarm systems, and access. Comments and recommendations of the police department are forwarded to the Planning Department for consideration and inclusion as development conditions.

Service to Unincorporated Areas

The Merced County Sheriff's Department is responsible for law enforcement within the unincorporated areas surrounding the City of Los Banos. In the event that the Sheriff's Department requires assistance or is unable to respond, the Los Banos Police Department will dispatch officers as needed, per request of the Sheriff's Department watch supervisor. The Sheriff's Department has full law enforcement authority in the unincorporated areas of Merced County, and the California Highway Patrol has full traffic enforcement responsibility in unincorporated areas of the County.

LOS BANOS AIRPORT

The Los Banos Airport Master Plan is being prepared which will address a 20 year time frame. The plan forecasts a growth in aircraft activity to the year 2010. The General Plan will assume that the physical airport will not expand significantly beyond current limits. Once completed, the Airport Master Plan will be incorporated into the General Plan.

SOLID WASTE

Organization & Facilities for Disposal

The Merced County Association of Governments provides a regional solid waste management and disposal approach to solid waste management activities in Merced County. Merced County Association of Governments owns and operates, through a contract with Merced County Department of Public Works, the Billy Wright Landfill located approximately four miles west of the City of Los Banos. Recent expansions to the site area and mandated reductions in solid waste disposal will allow this site to continue providing solid waste disposal for the City for the mid-term. Long-term alternatives for landfill disposal or securing another landfill site will be necessary to meet the build-out of the General Plan. The City of Los Banos is a member of Merced County Association of Governments and as such has an interest and role in planning and implementing the comprehensive solid waste management system in Merced County. The landfill operations are operated as an enterprise function by Merced County Association of Governments. These responsibilities include the financing, construction and operation of landfills, a materials recovery facility and several transfer stations. Additional responsibilities include all activities and waste diversion goals required by AB939 and the closure, post-closure monitoring and liabilities of all identified former landfills in Merced County.

The City of Los Banos contracts with Browning Ferris Industries, Inc., for solid waste collection services. Solid waste collection is managed by the Department of Finance and is operated as an enterprise function by the City of Los Banos.

SCHOOLS

Elementary and secondary public education services are provided in the Los Banos area by the Los Banos Unified School District. The Merced Community College District provides continuing education for residents of the area from facilities located in Los Banos and the City of Merced.

The Los Banos Unified School District's boundaries include about 640 square miles on the west side of Merced County. Although the City of Los Banos represents a small geographic portion of the District, a majority of the students and school facilities are located in the City of Los Banos. The District currently operates five elementary schools, (three of which are within the Los Banos Planning Area) the Los Banos Junior

High School, Los Banos High School, and San Luis Continuation School provide older students with educational services.

The School District's existing facilities are overcrowded and new growth will significantly continue to impact those facilities. The District has performed an analysis of its facilities and the impact of new growth on providing additional classrooms and resources, finding that the allowable developer impact fees currently established at \$1.93 per square foot of new residential structures are insufficient to provide adequate facilities. The School District has opted to institute a year-round school program in the elementary schools for the purpose of increasing the efficiency of the existing supply of classrooms to accommodate growth. The District has implemented a year-round approach to the Junior High curriculum as well. However, there remains a substantial unfunded portion of total cost to construct new schools which meet State and District standards. The District has adopted a policy of requesting full mitigation of school impacts for future projects which require General Plan or Zoning amendments. Modification of the City's General Plan is a legislative decision which is subject to the School District's policy requiring full mitigation.

The School District provided the City with a conceptual plan for the location of future schools within the General Plan Planning Area based on a total population of over 40,000 people. Their plan uses growth patterns and land uses consistent with the proposed General Plan Land Use Element. In this conceptual plan nine new elementary schools were suggested, four new junior high schools, and one new high school. The District utilized the State Department of Education recommendations for school sites, which generally specifies 8 to 10 acres for elementary schools, 20 acres for junior high schools, and 50 acres for high schools. The District is interested in continuing to site schools adjacent to future parks developed as part of the General Plan. Land Use Figure LU-1 shows the conceptual location of future schools. The School District has acquired land and is constructing a new Junior High School. Other school sites are only conceptual based on school siting criteria. These criteria require sites to be: 1) easily accessible from arterial roads, but they cannot be located on major arterial streets with heavy traffic patterns; 2) the sites should be located to encourage students to walk to school and avoid major roadway crossings, if possible; 3) the service area for Kindergarten through grade 3 should be a maximum of 0.75 mile, one mile for grades 4-8, and two miles for grades 9-12.

The Los Banos Unified School District is the responsible agency for planning and developing school sites within their district. The City of Los Banos has ultimate land use authority and has a responsibility to prescribe infrastructure improvements necessary to support school facilities. The City and School District must work together to ensure the appropriate location of schools from not only a land use perspective, but also from the ability to adequately provide public services and reasonable access. Because the sites shown on Figure LU-1 are only conceptual, those sites are not prevented from development to a non-school use. However, the potential school site designation does give the School District an opportunity to acquire the sites for schools in advance of development proposals. Adequate sites for schools may exist nearby the generalized

sites shown on Figure LU-1, these sites are not meant to be exact, but only to serve as a guide for potential sites.

GOALS

The goals of the Public Facilities and Services Element are:

- ☐ To provide sufficient levels of public facilities and services, based upon timely planning and adequate funding.
- ☐ To ensure adequate water quality and quantity to meet both existing and planned needs.
- ☐ To ensure adequate wastewater collection and treatment to meet both existing and planned needs.
- ☐ To ensure adequate stormwater collection and disposal to meet both existing and planned needs.
- ☐ To ensure appropriate waste stream reduction through education, recycling and other means.
- ☐ To ensure that public services, including police, fire, city hall, and schools, are able to keep pace with demand.

Public Facilities

Objectives, Policies, & Programs

OBJECTIVE PF 1

Provide sufficient levels of facilities and services prior to or concurrent with planned development.

POLICY PF 1.1

New development shall be phased according to the capacity of public facilities and services to serve new development.

POLICY PF 1.2

Encourage the concurrent (as opposed to piecemeal) annexation of adjacent unincorporated properties in order to facilitate the formation of assessment districts, benefit districts, and other financial mechanisms which will provide public facilities in an efficient and effective manner.

Program PF 1.2-A

Future annexation applications shall include a full and complete analysis of the public services required for the proposed development, and provide an analysis which includes the surrounding property to determine; 1) if expansion of the proposed annexation will be beneficial to accommodate the adequate development and financing of required public services; or 2) if existing public services to existing development require improvements to maintain or meet current level-of-service standards.

POLICY PF 1.3

Develop and maintain Master Plans for water production and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, and storm water collection and disposal which address future growth demands and address public facilities in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

POLICY PF 1.4

The sizing of sewer lines will be reduced as they approach the edge of urban development in the Planning Area to limit growth influences beyond the Urban Limit Line.

OBJECTIVE PF 2

New development shall pay fees as necessary to meet all identified costs associated with new development.

POLICY PF 2.1

New development shall be responsible for the public costs attached to each development project, which include, but are not limited to, the acquisition of permanent open space, the provision of adequate school facilities, and the provision of streets, street lighting, sidewalks, landscaping, water, sewer, storm drains, and other infrastructure needs, including the preparation of master plans for these systems.

POLICY PF 2.2

New development shall be responsible for paying a financial contribution to mitigate the effect of the development on the provision of such public services as police and fire protection, solid waste disposal, public education, water, drainage, and sewer.

Program PF 2.2-A

During deliberation on proposed projects, the Planning Department shall include a finding in their staff report which addresses the adequacy of public services and the method by which the proposed development is to provide for these public services as part of the development, if they are inadequate.

POLICY PF 2.3

Construction permits shall not be granted until the developer provides for the installation and/or financing of needed public facilities.

POLICY PF 2.4

Occupancy permits shall not be granted until the public facilities needed to serve the occupancy are installed and operational.

OBJECTIVE PF 3

Maintain existing public facilities and services.

POLICY PF 3.1

Existing public facilities shall be upgraded as they become deteriorated or obsolete.

Program PF 3.1-A

Include in the Capital Improvement Program the upgrading of existing facilities that have become deteriorated or obsolete to the degree that public service has been diminished.

OBJECTIVE PF 4

Provide an adequate supply and distribution of quality water to support the General Plan level of development.

POLICY PF 4.1

Treatment facilities shall meet or exceed current standards set by federal, state, or local regulatory agencies.

POLICY PF 4.2

The City shall condition approval of new development projects on the availability of adequate water supply and infrastructure to serve the new development.

POLICY PF 4.3

The City shall work cooperatively with other water management agencies to prepare a groundwater management program as needed to ensure sufficient water supply for the build-out of the General Plan.

POLICY PF 4.4

When necessary and practical, the City will cooperate with other water agencies to acquire water for the direct treatment and use or the recharge, replenishment and/or banking of groundwater for future demand.

Program PF 4.4-A

The City shall continue to pursue the identification and acquisition of surface water rights or supply agreements to meet future water supply needs.

Program PF 4.4-B

The City shall continue to participate with other water agencies in groundwater recharge efforts, as practical, using identified recharge areas such as Los Banos Creek. This participation may include the development of multi-use open space corridors or recreation facilities combined with recharge facilities.

POLICY PF 4.5

The City shall extend water service to new areas based on its ability to meet domestic and fire flow needs of the area.

Program PF 4.5-A

The City shall prepare and maintain a water network analysis model which demonstrates its ability to meet development standards and identifies system shortfalls.

Program PF 4.5-B

The City shall include in its Capital Improvement Program, system-wide improvements which are required to maintain current levels of service while extending service to newly developing areas.

POLICY PF 4.6

New development of public facilities shall include water conservation features and drought resistant landscaping.

POLICY PF 4.7

All water system improvements shall comply with the City of Los Banos Public Works Construction Standards.

OBJECTIVE PF 5

Ensure provision of sufficient wastewater collection and treatment facilities to support the existing and future development at General Plan build-out.

POLICY PF 5.1

Continue to provide sewer services and operate major public facilities.

Program PF 5.1-A

The City shall continue to plan for expansion of its wastewater treatment facilities as part of its Capital Improvement Program. Expansion projects shall be implemented in a manner consistent with the magnitude and timing of project demands and the availability of financing and other resources.

Program PF 5.1-B

The City shall update the Wastewater Collection Master Plan as necessary to include alternative analysis of water reclamation facilities.

POLICY PF 5.2

Require new development to be responsible for construction of all sewer lines serving such development (including oversizing of sewers); the costs of oversizing shall be borne by the beneficiaries of the oversizing.

POLICY PF 5.3

All sewer collection improvements shall comply with the City of Los Banos Public Works Construction Standards.

OBJECTIVE PF 6

Provide a stormwater drainage system that serves the General Plan level of development in a planned and orderly manner.

POLICY PF 6.1

The City shall condition approval of development projects on the provision of adequate storm drainage improvements.

POLICY PF 6.2

The City shall require the extension of storm drains to new areas in accordance with the phasing of a storm drainage master plan.

Program PF 6.2-A

Prepare an updated Master Storm Drainage Plan to support General Plan and Phasing Area Concept Plan land uses, including proposed drainage facilities and estimated costs.

POLICY PF 6.3

Detention basins should be considered for multiple uses (recreation, parking, etc.), particularly larger basins, providing the basic detention function is not lost or impaired and maintenance and liability issues can be satisfactorily resolved.

OBJECTIVE PF 7

Maintain storm drainage facilities to preserve their function and capacity.

POLICY PF 7.1

Natural and manmade channels, detention basins, and other drainage facilities shall be maintained to ensure that their full use and carrying capacity is not impaired.

POLICY PF 7.2

Continue to require new development to discharge storm water runoff at volumes no greater than the capacity of any portion of the existing downstream system by utilizing detention or retention or other approved methods, unless the project is providing drainage pursuant to an adopted drainage plan.

Program PF 7.2-A

Consolidate policies, programs, and standards for flood control and storm drainage in a Storm Drainage ordinance.

POLICY PF 7.3

All drainage improvements shall comply with the City of Los Banos Public Works Construction Standards.

OBJECTIVE PF 8

Provide timely, functional, safe, and attractive public buildings in order to provide high levels of public service.

POLICY PF 8.1

Maintain the City government center in the City Center.

Program PF 8.1-A

Participate in Master Plans or Specific Plans for the City Center to ensure the needs of expanding City space for building and parking are adequately met.

POLICY PF 8.2

The City shall acquire land and construct additional structures for fire and police services to maintain acceptable response times throughout the General Plan Area.

Program PF 8.2-A

The City shall analyze the additional service demands for fire and police services and, as necessary, require new development to provide funding to meet the cost of expanding the service.

POLICY PF 8.3

Continue to promote the use of existing City structures for various educational, cultural, and civic programs by the community.

POLICY PF 8.4

Encourage the clustering of public and quasi-public uses such as schools, parks, libraries, child care facilities, and community activity centers to maximize the utility and efficiency of these facilities.

POLICY PF 8.5

Promote the use of local public schools by school and community creative arts groups.

OBJECTIVE PF 9

Assist School Districts in planning for and providing educational facilities with sufficient permanent capacity to meet the needs of current and projected future enrollment.

POLICY PF 9.1

Encourage the Los Banos Unified District and the Merced College District to develop comprehensive master plans as a means of providing greater detail on specific school sites, buildings, educational facilities, and funding mechanisms.

POLICY PF 9.2

Support school sites which are appropriately located within attendance areas.

Program PF 9.2-A

Siting criteria for new schools should include the following:

1. *Elementary schools should be planned as an integral part of neighborhoods, located away from major arterial streets and linked with recreational parks and community corridors serving residential neighborhoods, and situated so as to reduce or eliminate the need for student transportation;*
2. *Middle schools and high schools should be located with respect to the student populations which they serve, with direct access provided from collector or arterial streets;*
3. *Middle schools are generally considered compatible with most residential and park uses, but are not generally considered compatible with retail commercial and general industrial uses;*
4. *High schools are generally considered compatible with most residential, park, service commercial, office, and light industrial uses, but are not generally considered compatible with retail commercial and general industrial uses.*

POLICY PF 9.3

Notify the School District of newly proposed developments as early in the review process as possible to allow ample time for the assessment of impacts on school facility needs.

POLICY PF 9.4

Whenever possible, school sites should be integrated with recreation parks, and community recreation corridors to maximize the benefits of those facilities as pedestrian and bicycle access corridors. Collectively these facilities should be arranged to provide a minimum of interruption by the street system.

Program PF 9.4-A

Where feasible, work with the School District to design and implement safe pedestrian and bicycle paths along canals and other transportation facilities which promote the use of these trails as alternative transportation to school sites. Where crossings of these facilities will promote access to schools and otherwise enhance alternative transit modes, the City should investigate cooperative development of such facilities with the School District, state agencies, and public utilities.

POLICY PF 9.5

The City of Los Banos shall consider approving residential projects which have recognized the impact of new development on the Los Banos Unified School District and provided mitigation for those impacts to the extent allowable by law.

OBJECTIVE PF 10

Provide adequate public utilities.

POLICY PF 10.1

The City shall designate adequate, appropriately located land for utility uses.

POLICY PF 10.2

The City shall continue to circulate development proposals to local utility providers, including Pacific Gas and Electric, Pacific Bell, local cable television providers, and irrigation districts, for their review and comment and to ensure that they can and will provide service to development.

POLICY PF 10.3

The City shall continue to work with local utility providers to allow them adequate time to prepare plans for servicing new planned growth.

OBJECTIVE PF 11

Support adequate solid waste disposal capacity.

POLICY PF 11.1

Reduce the amount of waste disposed of at the landfill by reducing in the amounts and the solid waste stream as mandated by State law. State law currently requires a 25 percent reduction by 1995 and a 50 percent reduction by 2000.

Program PF 11.1-A

Continue to cooperate with the Merced County Association of Governments to promote and implement source reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting as ways of reducing waste and increasing landfill capacity.

POLICY PF 11.2

Continue to participate as member of the Merced County Association of Governments by providing input on waste management issues including the expansion of the Billy Wright Landfill, or such new location as feasible.

[End of Public Facilities Element]

APPENDIX A

POPULATION AND HOUSING ASSUMPTIONS CONTAINED IN THE GENERAL PLAN

City of Los Banos - General Plan
Population and Housing Forecast
Based on approximately 4% population growth rate
1-20-98
Percentage of Housing Type

Type	Acres	Percent	Population Per Household	Density per Acre
VLD	524	9.38%	3.25	3
LD	4,336	77.59%	3.04	4.3
MD	598	10.70%	2.5	11
HD	130	2.33%	1.8	15
Total	5,588			

Analysis of Los Banos General Plan Land Use Program

Relationship of Commercial and Industrial Land to Residential Land (Jobs/Housing Balance)

Residential Acrs.	Commercial	Industrial	Total
Total	Total	Total	Total
1,697	487	286	2,470
% of Total			
68.7%	19.7%	11.6%	

Ratio of Residential Land to Commercial and Industrial Land
10.0% 12.0%

According to Urban Research Associates (1992) the 10.4% Commercial share of total land use is high for a City the size of Los Banos compared with comparable size cities. Almost double, but because of its regional location is expected.

Los Banos General Plan - Growth Forecast

Total Land Needed Based on Calculated Population Growth Rate

Sep-97

Year	Residential Population by Type				Residential Acres Required by Type-Annual				Cumulative	Residential Dwelling Units by Type-Cumulative				Non-Residential		Cumulative Total	Total Cumulative Demand Res.Com,Indus.	Market Factor	Total Land Needed
	SF % Total	MD % Total	HD % Total	Total	SF	MD	HD	Total		SF	MD	HD	Cumulative Total	C % Total	I % Total				
	86.97%	10.70%	2.33%											10.0%	12.0%				
1997	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1998	720	89	19	828	55.1	3.2	0.7	59.0	59.0	237	35	11	283	5.9	7.1	13.0	72.0	36	108
1999	749	92	20	861	57.3	3.4	0.7	61.4	120.4	246	37	11	577	12.0	14.4	26.5	146.9	73	220
2000	779	96	21	895	59.6	3.5	0.8	63.8	184.2	256	38	12	883	18.4	22.1	40.5	224.7	112	337
2001	810	100	22	931	62.0	3.6	0.8	66.4	250.6	266	40	12	1,202	25.1	30.1	55.1	305.7	153	459
2002	842	104	23	968	64.4	3.8	0.8	69.0	319.6	277	41	13	1,533	32.0	38.4	70.3	389.9	195	585
2003	876	108	23	1,007	67.0	3.9	0.9	71.8	391.4	288	43	13	1,877	39.1	47.0	86.1	477.5	239	716
2004	911	112	24	1,047	69.7	4.1	0.9	74.7	466.1	300	45	14	2,235	46.6	55.9	102.5	568.6	284	853
2005	947	117	25	1,089	72.5	4.2	0.9	77.7	543.7	312	47	14	2,607	54.4	65.2	119.6	663.3	332	995
2006	985	121	26	1,133	75.4	4.4	1.0	80.8	624.5	324	48	15	2,994	62.4	74.9	137.4	761.9	381	1,143
2007	1,025	126	27	1,178	78.4	4.6	1.0	84.0	708.5	337	50	15	3,397	70.8	85.0	155.9	864.3	432	1,296
2008	1,066	131	29	1,225	81.5	4.8	1.1	87.3	795.8	351	52	16	3,816	79.6	95.5	175.1	970.9	485	1,456
2009	1,108	136	30	1,274	84.8	5.0	1.1	90.8	886.6	365	55	16	4,252	88.7	106.4	195.1	1,081.7	541	1,623
2010	1,153	142	31	1,325	88.2	5.2	1.1	94.5	981.1	379	57	17	4,705	98.1	117.7	215.8	1,197.0	598	1,795
2011	1,199	147	32	1,378	91.7	5.4	1.2	98.3	1,079.4	394	59	18	5,176	107.9	129.5	237.5	1,316.8	658	1,975
2012	1,247	153	33	1,433	95.4	5.6	1.2	102.2	1,181.5	410	61	19	5,666	118.2	141.8	259.9	1,441.5	721	2,162
2013	1,297	160	35	1,491	99.2	5.8	1.3	106.3	1,287.8	426	64	19	6,175	128.8	154.5	283.3	1,571.1	786	2,357
2014	1,348	166	36	1,550	103.2	6.0	1.3	110.5	1,398.3	444	66	20	6,705	139.8	167.8	307.6	1,706.0	853	2,559
2015	1,402	173	38	1,612	107.3	6.3	1.4	114.9	1,513.3	461	69	21	7,256	151.3	181.6	332.9	1,846.2	923	2,769
2016	1,458	179	39	1,677	111.6	6.5	1.4	119.5	1,632.8	480	72	22	7,830	163.3	195.9	359.2	1,992.0	996	2,988
2017	1,517	187	41	1,744	116.0	6.8	1.5	124.3	1,757.1	499	75	23	8,426	175.7	210.9	386.6	2,143.7	1,072	3,216
2018	1,577	194	42	1,814	120.7	7.1	1.6	129.3	1,886.4	519	78	23	9,046	188.6	226.4	415.0	2,301.4	1,151	3,452
2019	1,641	202	44	1,886	125.5	7.3	1.6	134.5	2,020.9	540	81	24	9,690	202.1	242.5	444.6	2,465.5	1,233	3,698
2020	1,706	210	46	1,962	130.5	7.6	1.7	139.8	2,160.7	561	84	25	10,361	216.1	259.3	475.4	2,636.1	1,318	3,954

APPENDIX B

AIR QUALITY POLICIES AND PROGRAMS CONTAINED IN THE GENERAL PLAN

This Appendix presents objectives, policies, and programs contained in the General Plan Elements which support and implement most of the SJVUAPCD air quality recommendations and are designated with **AQ** in parenthesis behind the Objective, Policy or Program. This is a complete listing of the Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs designed to implement the model Air Quality Element recommended by the SJVAPCD. The General Plan Chapter Designations are: LU-Land Use, CI-Circulation, OCR-Open Space, HZ-Hazards, PF-Public Facilities.

Policy LU 4.5 (AQ)

Multiple Family development shall be planned near existing or projected commercial facilities and open space, and served by collector or arterial streets.

Policy LU 5.1 (AQ)

Special residential land uses, such as senior housing, shall be distributed throughout the City to assure their accessibility to activity centers and shopping areas, and to provide the option of continuing to reside in neighborhoods of mixed economic, ethnic and age groups.

Policy LU 5.2 (AQ)

Senior residential housing projects proposed on the periphery of the developed area of the City shall be required to provide evidence of adequate and affordable special transportation, such as vans, as part of project development.

Policy LU 5.3 (AQ)

Home occupations may be permitted in single family residential areas where the use is clearly incidental and secondary to the use of the residence for dwelling purposes.

Program LU 5.3-A (AQ)

The Zoning Ordinance shall contain development standards for Home Occupations that have potential to generate traffic, noise, odor and other potential conflicts.

Objective LU 6 (AQ)

Adopt design standards which encourage residential areas to have a "neighborhood orientation."

Policy LU 6.1 (AQ)

New residential developments designed for individual lots, or clustered units shall have varied front yard setbacks.

Program LU 6.1-A (AQ)

Amend the Zoning Ordinance residential setback requirements to provide for average setbacks that allow parts of the dwelling to be closer to the roadway when the garage is set further off of the road.

Objective LU 7 (AQ)

Create an enhanced streetscape environment through the use of landscape standards and pedestrian access along arterial and collector streets.

Policy LU 7.1 (AQ)

Arterial and Major Collector streets in residential and commercial areas shall be landscaped to promote an inviting tree lined street appearance.

Program LU 7.1-A (AQ)

The City shall adopt streetscaping and street tree planting standards for Arterial and Major Collector Streets.

Policy LU 7.2 (AQ)

Where sound walls are required along arterial, major and minor collector streets, they shall be landscaped according to the Streetscaping standards adopted by the City, and where feasible combined with "daylighted" cul-de-sacs.

Program LU 7.2-A (AQ)

The City shall develop subdivision design guidelines which define design preferences, and include sound wall and "daylighted" cul-de-sac standards in the City subdivision development standards.

Objective LU 8 (AQ)

Minimize conflicts between residential uses and other incompatible land uses.

Policy LU 8.1 (AQ)

Infrastructure master plans shall limit system design to only providing capacity for development within the *Urban Limit Line*.

Policy LU 8.2 (AQ)

Appropriate buffers or other effective measures shall be included in development plans to ensure that conflicts such as noise, odor, light and glare, dust, or other

potentially significant adverse environmental conditions including major wetlands and significant wildlife habitats are minimized.

Program LU 8.2-A (AQ)

In order to protect industrial, agricultural and environmental reserve land uses from intrusion and impact of residential land uses, proponents of residential projects in proximity to existing industrial, agricultural and environmental reserve Land Use Designations or major wetlands or significant wildlife habitats shall be required to provide the City with a full and complete written discussion that addresses the project's impact on the viability of the existing or proposed industrial, agricultural or environmental reserve use. These discussions shall include noise, hazardous materials, emergency response and evacuation, air quality, odors, light and glare, traffic, public services and aesthetics. Proposals for Master Plans east of the San Luis Canal and development approaching the San Luis Canal from the west shall include a discussion of buffer areas along the Canal which may minimize adverse impacts on the Giant Garter Snake habitat (See Open Space Element).

Policy LU 8.3 (AQ)

New development on the fringes of the City shall recognize the right of agriculture to exist and continue to operate in proximity to the development. Deed restrictions may be required which inform future residents of the right of agriculture to continue within the limits of the law without interference or protest from nearby property owners.

Program LU 8.3-A (AQ)

Development proposals within one thousand (1,000) feet of the Urban Limit Line shall be required to address the potential conflict with neighboring agricultural uses, and the City shall determine whether there is sufficient cause to require Deed restrictions to protect the right of agriculture to continue outside of the Urban Limit Line.

Policy LU 9.1 (AQ)

Developers of commercial uses shall be required to participate in funding of transportation improvements necessary to accommodate the level of activity anticipated. Transportation improvements may include construction of major streets, signalization, public transit operational improvements, freeway ramps, bridges, interchanges and other major improvements to the extent such improvements are necessary to serve the commercial uses.

Program LU 9.1-A (AQ)

Development conditions of approval should reflect that the City's Capital Improvement Program has been considered, and that action is taken to ensure the Program's implementation.

Policy LU 10.1 (AQ)

The City shall work with the Chamber of Commerce, and other interested groups to develop a Specific Plan for the precise planning and implementation of programs to support the continued evolution and vitality of the City Center. The Specific Plan shall include detailed development requirements and guidelines for the City Center.

Policy LU 11.1 (AQ)

Neighborhood Commercial sites shall provide neighborhood-oriented mixed uses that provide for convenience shopping and services.

Policy LU 11.3 (AQ)

Neighborhood Commercial sites are intended to serve the daily needs of a surrounding residential population base, and generally be located one mile from each other at the intersections of Major Collector streets or in special circumstances at Arterial and Major Collector intersections. Special circumstances include the proximity of existing Neighborhood Commercial sites, projected land use, and location and configuration of Major Collector streets within the area.

Policy LU 12.1 (AQ)

Development proponents are required to demonstrate that adequate circulation improvements including street improvements, signalization, bridges, public transit, and parking facilities are available or can be made available through mitigation measures to serve the proposed project.

Program LU 12.1-A (AQ)

Occupancy Permits will not be issued until associated traffic, public transit, and parking impact mitigation measures are completed or an agreement has been approved for their completion.

Program LU 13.2-A (AQ)

New industrial development proposed near existing or planned residential land uses shall require to provide the City with a full and complete written discussion that addresses the project's impact on the viability of the existing or proposed residential land uses. The discussion shall include noise, hazardous materials,

emergency response and evacuation, air quality, odors, light and glare, traffic, and aesthetics.

Policy LU 14.1 (AQ)

Appropriate truck routes shall be designated serving the industrial area which promote direct access and are functionally adequate.

Program LU 14.1-A (AQ)

Where capital improvements are necessary to provide suitable truck routes, the improvements shall be incorporated into the Capital Improvement Program adopted by the City. The Capital Improvement Program shall identify funding sources including, assessment districts, general fund, grants, state subventions, and fees available to fund such projects.

Policy LU 15.2 (AQ)

The City supports Merced County General Plan objectives and policies which direct new industrial and commercial development to cities and require new residential development to be contiguous to urban development and to annex to the City, and to maintain limited agriculture land use designations between the Urban Limit Line and the City's General Plan Area of Interest Boundary.

Policy LU 15.3 (AQ)

The City supports Merced County General Plan objectives and policies which protect agricultural lands by maintaining large parcel sizes and preventing the development of incompatible urban uses, specifically maintaining large parcels adjacent to urban areas prior to conversion to urban uses, prevent the division of parcels less than 10 acres in size within the City's General Plan Area of Interest Boundary.

Program LU 15.3-A (AQ)

- a) The Los Banos General Plan identifies its desired Sphere of Influence boundary and all planned land uses in the expanded sphere, and defines the boundary as the Urban Limit Line.*
- b) The Los Banos General Plan contains policies regarding the phasing of future annexations which is consistent with LAFCo policies:*
 - 1. The Urban Limit Line or urban development generally follows the Santa Fe Canal on the east, Los Banos Creek on the west, future alternative alignments of Highway 152 on the north and south.*

2. *Urban land uses contained in the General Plan include density and intensity standards along with other development policies, and requirements for Area Plans, Specific Plans, and Development Agreements for newly annexed areas.*
3. *Phasing of development shall be included in the adopted Area Plans, Specific Plans, and Development Agreements for newly annexed areas.*
4. *Public infrastructure will be planned before development is approved, and availability of infrastructure will dictate development timing consistent with Area Plans, Specific Plans, and Development Agreements for newly annexed areas.*
5. *Agricultural uses will be encouraged to continue until time of development, and where the potential for land use conflict exists "right to farm" conditions will be incorporated into development approvals. Irrigation water shall be retained until time of urban development.*

Objective LU 17 (AQ)

Adopt an Urban Limit Line that allows the scope and intensity of development to be planned before it occurs.

Policy LU 17.1 (AQ)

Urban level development shall only occur within the City. Any urban development shall occur within the incorporated City and within the *Urban Limit Line* consistent with the land uses adopted by the General Plan.

Objective LU 18 (AQ)

Reduce the number of annexations, but increase the size and level of overall planning of annexations by requiring area plans, specific plans and/or development agreements before rezoning and annexation.

Policy LU 18.1 (AQ)

Area Plans or Specific Plans including development agreements prepared by property owners shall be required for new development in those areas indicated on Figure LU-6 prior to LAFCo recordation of the Certificate of Completion.

Policy LU 19.1 (AQ)

Support Merced County planning activities which direct commercial, industrial and residential and urban growth outside of the Los Banos Area of Interest Boundary to established unincorporated communities.

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Policy LU 19.1 (AQ)

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Policy LU 20.1 (AQ)

Actively participate in regional transportation planning, solid waste disposal, ground water recharge, air quality, and other significant regional issues effecting multiple agencies.

Policy LU 21.1 (AQ)

Land Use Designations for commercial, office, service commercial, and industrial should be held for such use to assure that there will be sufficient land available to create an economic base and job generating potential to serve future residents. Efforts to utilize this land for residential purposes should be discouraged unless proponents can demonstrate that there is a sufficient amount of land suitable for job creating uses, desirable and accessible locations, to maintain a positive fiscal and housing to job ratio in the City.

Program CI 1.1-C (AQ)

The City will encourage property owners in newly developing areas to prepare Master Plans or Specific Plans which identify future major street alignments. The City will participate in the design of street alignments in advance of development to ensure consistent and logical design of the circulation system.

Policy CI 1.2 (AQ)

Coordinate planning and development of the circulation system with development approvals throughout the City.

Program CI 1.2-B (AQ)

When new streets are provided at the periphery of a project, minimum construction shall consist of full half-width construction on the site nearest the project plus a minimum of one lane of travel in the opposite direction.

Policy CI 1.3 (AQ)

Locations of Major Collector street intersections with Arterial streets shall be fixed by the Circulation Map. Roadway dedications and development design shall implement the Circulation Map. Location of Major Collector alignments in newly developing areas shall be logical, efficient, and established early in the development process to aid in the consistent design of subdivisions.

Program CI 2.1-D (AQ)

Encourage the use of carpooling, vanpooling and flexible employment hours to maintain an acceptable level of service on City streets and highway/interregional facilities.

Program CI 2.1-E (AQ)

Properly space and coordinate traffic signals in order to minimize the acceleration, idling and deceleration that produces higher vehicular emissions levels as part of a Transportation System Management program.

Objective CI 4 (AQ)

Achieve a coordinated regional and local transportation system that minimizes traffic congestion and efficiently serves users.

Policy CI 4.1 (AQ)

Work with Caltrans to identify needed improvements to its highway facilities in the City and implement necessary programs and funding mechanisms to assist in improving Highways 152 and 165, their common intersection, and their intersections with local roadways.

Policy CI 4.2 (AQ)

Support coordination with other cities, counties and planning agencies concerning consideration and management of land use, jobs/housing balance and transportation planning as a means of improving air quality.

Policy CI 4.3 (AQ)

Cooperate with local and regional jurisdictions in the preparation of state-mandated regional plans, including the San Joaquin Valley Clean Air Plan.

Policy CI 4.4 (AQ)

Coordinate local transportation plans with the Merced County Congestion Management Program, when developed, to ensure eligibility for state and federal funding.

Policy CI 4.5 (AQ)

Continue to support Merced County Council of Governments ride-sharing programs which provide up-to-date lists of potential riders and education of the public on commuting options.

Policy CI 5.1 (AQ)

Subdivision layouts should include safe and pleasant designs which promote pedestrian access to arterial and major collector streets, and consider the location of community services, such as schools, parks, disabled persons, and neighborhood shopping activity centers in the accessibility of their design.

Program CI 5.1-A (AQ)

Encourage the use of "day-lighted" cul-de-sacs for residential sidewalk access to Arterial and Collector streets to increase pedestrian access to the Arterial or Collector street.

Program CI 5.1-B (AQ)

Implement street standards that include sidewalk or walkways on both sides of streets, where appropriate. Where existing roads may require additional right-of-way to accommodate full improvements including sidewalks, and where it is impractical to acquire sufficient right-of-way, the vehicle travel-way will be the first priority.

Policy CI 5.2 (AQ)

Bicycle lanes, where feasible, should be established along Major Collector streets in newly developing areas. A bicycle route system should be identified and maintained which serves the existing developed City. This route system may utilize City streets, canals, stream banks or other right-of-way. Where on-street bicycle lanes are proposed they should be considered a shared facility with vehicular traffic on the street.

Program CI 5.2-A (AQ)

A separately striped Class II bike lane shall be provided along Mercey Springs Road as required by agreement with Caltrans.

Program CI 5.2-B(AQ)

Maintain and implement the Los Banos Commuter Bike Plan as Adopted by the City.

Policy CI 5.3 (AQ)

Sources of funding for operation and maintenance of multi-use trails accommodating pedestrian and bicycle use shall be clearly identified before construction. Trail systems shall be supported by a long-term maintenance funding mechanism.

Program CI 5.3-A (AQ)

Develop canals, waterways and excess rail road right-of-way as a non-motorized transportation enhancement to promote the walking, cycling and other non-motorized means of transportation.

Objective CI 6 (AQ)

Develop a public transit system capable of satisfying both local and regional travel demand.

Policy CI 6.1 (AQ)

Recognize the efforts of other social service transit providers including schools, mental health services, and others who provide specialized transit services when planning circulation system components.

Policy CI 8.1 (AQ)

Encourage the development of appropriate locations for park-and-ride facilities for commute traffic.

Program CI 8.1-A (AQ)

Sites for stand-alone park-and-ride lots should generally be located near highly traveled commute routes.

Program CI 8.1-B (AQ)

Sites for park-and-ride lots should be encouraged to be incorporated in regional commercial parking areas.

Program CI 9.4-A (AQ)

Traffic signals should not be closer than one-quarter (1/4) mile apart on arterial and major collector streets unless conditions warrant additional signalization to improve traffic flow. Where traffic conditions or signal spacing warrant, adjacent traffic signals shall be under synchronized control.

Program CI 9.4-B (AQ)

Separation of Minor Collector Street entry points should not be less than 500 feet apart on Arterial streets, Major Collector streets, and other Minor Collector streets. Median standards of 1,000 feet apply to Minor Collector intersections with Arterial streets.

Program CI 9.4-C (AQ)

Major Arterial streets shall be built at an approximate separation of one (1) mile. Major Arterial streets are planned for newly developing areas where acquisition of ultimate right-of-way can be achieved without significant disruption of existing uses. Because of existing right-of-way limitations, Major Arterial streets may connect with Minor Arterial streets employing design modifications.

Program CI 9.4-D (AQ)

Minor Arterial streets shall be on an approximate one (1) mile separation and may be an extension of the Major Arterial streets. The design of the Minor Arterial is constrained by significant right-of-way limitations; however, the roadway must function at arterial traffic levels.

Policy CI 9.5 (AQ)

Planning and development of Arterial and Major Collector Streets shall include design features which can be used as public transit stops.

Program CI 9.5-A (AQ)

Arterial and Major Collector streets shall be designed to allow transit vehicles to pull out of traffic by using either a continuous parking lane with bus stops, or with special bus pull-out lanes.

Program CI 9.9-C (AQ)

Subdivision designs should be encouraged to use “daylighted” cul-de-sacs opening on to Arterial and Collector streets thereby providing enhanced pedestrian access to future public transit system routes.

Program CI 9.9-E (AQ)

Integrate into the City Improved Standards and Specifications design details for “Daylighted” cul-de-sacs which can be jointly used for public transit pick-up locations along Arterial and Collector streets.

Policy CI 10.3 (AQ)

Require that all public and private employers with more than 100 employees develop Transportation System Management plans as a means of encouraging employees to use some form of collective transportation to commute to and from work. These plans should include not only information regarding rideshare lists and available transit, but also provision of transit passes, preferential rideshare vehicle parking and other incentives for participating employees.

Program CI 10.3-A (AQ)

New development shall consider Transportation System Management and Transportation Demand Management as strategies for the mitigation of traffic and parking congestion. Public transit, traffic management, ride sharing and parking management are to be used to the greatest extent practical to implement transportation management strategies.

Policy OCR 1.1 (AQ)

Create a greenbelt/open space buffer around the perimeter of the city that provides a clear sense of identity for the City of Los Banos.

Program OCR 1.1-A (AQ)

Very low density residential and industrial land uses will be included in the land use plan to reduce density toward the edge of the Los Banos Planning Area. The sizing of sewer lines will be reduced as they approach the edge of urban development in the Planning Area to limit growth influences beyond the Planning Area boundary.

Program OCR 1.1-B (AQ)

The City of Los Banos will continue to coordinate land use planning efforts with Merced County to ensure that agricultural land use continues to surround the Los Banos Planning Area.

Program OCR 1.1-C (AQ)

In connection with General Plan Circulation policies, landscape design requirements will be considered for new projects which develop along the entryways to the City, in particular Highways 152 and 165. Landscape design within required setbacks should promote a sense of transition from the surrounding agricultural area to urban setting. Utilization of trees to screen urban uses along these entryways is encouraged within the setback.

Objective OCR 3 (AQ)

Guide urban development toward vacant or under-used land within the urbanized area and direct new growth toward contiguous lands to protect from premature urban development of agricultural lands and other open spaces used for the managed production of resources.

Policy OCR 3.1 (AQ)

Existing agricultural areas shall be retained in agricultural use until the time that such areas are needed for logical urban expansion.

Policy OCR 6.2 (AQ)

Where feasible, Arterial and Major Collector streets should be constructed to provide landscaping along the edges and in median strips to enhance these street systems as aesthetic open space corridors.

Program OCR 6.2-A (AQ)

The City shall develop design guidelines and standards for the construction of landscaping and improvement of Arterial and Major Collector streets which are to be landscaped.

Objective OCR 7 (AQ)

Encourage the provision of open space areas throughout the Planning Area through the preservation and enhancement of natural features or the joint use of other public facilities and/or rights-of-ways.

Policy OCR 7.1 (AQ)

To the extent feasible, maintain water courses within the Los Banos Planning Area as components of a stormwater disposal program, and a possible recreational trail system. Public access within potentially sensitive habitat areas of the sloughs or waterways shall be considered individually to ensure protection of existing habitat resources.

Policy OCR 7.2 (AQ)

Major utility easement corridors shall be designated for recreational open space unless an acceptable trail alternative is included in a development plan.

Program OCR 14.2-B (AQ)

Pocket Parks shall have a general service area of approximately one-quarter (3) mile radius, and serve specific neighborhoods in which they are located.

Program OCR 14.3-B (AQ)

Neighborhood Parks shall have a general service area of approximately one-half (2) mile radius, and situated to avoid patrons having to cross arterial streets, railroad lines and major waterways.

Program OCR 14.3-D (AQ)

Whenever possible, Neighborhood Parks shall be developed in conjunction with elementary schools.

Program OCR 14.4-D (AQ)

Community Parks shall have a general service area of approximately two (2) mile radius, and situated to provide adequate access to arterial and collector streets. Care must be taken when siting Community Parks to avoid conflict with nearby residential uses.

Program HZ 2.1-D (AQ)

Consider the emission of toxic air contaminants from existing facilities when siting new sensitive receptors near such a source. Where appropriate, consultation and coordination with SJVUAPCD shall be undertaken.

Program HZ 2.1-G (AQ)

Identify potential users and producers of hazardous materials at the time of permit application and mitigate dangers associated with these materials. Where appropriate, consultation and coordination with SJVUAPCD shall be undertaken.

Program HZ 2.1-H (AQ)

Land uses using, storing or producing hazardous materials shall be located at a safe distance from other uses that may be adversely affected by such activities. Sensitive receptors such as schools, hospitals, day care centers, convalescent homes, and other immobile populations shall be considered during the review process. Where appropriate, consultation and coordination with SJVUAPCD shall be undertaken.

Objective HZ 7 (AQ)

Develop effective communication, cooperation, and coordination in establishing and operating community and regional air quality programs.

Policy HZ 7.1 (AQ)

The City shall endeavor through the project review and environmental assessment process, to accurately determine and provide for fair and implementable mitigation measures for air quality impacts.

Program HZ 7.1-A (AQ)

Once the SJVUAPCD emission thresholds are established, the City will require air quality analysis on projects which exceed those thresholds to be included in environmental documents.

Program HZ 7.1-B (AQ)

Where mitigation measures have been determined to be feasible and implementable, such measures may become recommended conditions of the project approval process.

Program HZ 7.1-C (AQ)

The City will work with other local governmental agencies on a regional basis to develop realistic and implementable basin-wide Air Quality Impact Assessment Guidelines that will provide standard criteria for determining significant environmental effects, a uniform method of calculating project emissions, and standard mitigation measures applicable to all cities.

Program HZ 7.1-D (AQ)

Among the environmental review mitigation measures or conditions for development are appropriate air quality mitigation measures recommended by the SJVUAPCD to reduce particulate emissions from construction, grading, and demolition.

Program HZ 7.1-E (AQ)

Through the environmental assessment and review process, the City will encourage developers to limit fireplace installations in new projects which do not meet EPA Phase II standards. Natural gas, pellet stoves, or other devices which minimize emissions shall be encouraged.

Program HZ 7.1-F (AQ)

Assist the SJVUAPCD in implementing District Regulation VIII where appropriate.

Policy HZ 7.2 (AQ)

Because air quality problems and solutions require regional cooperation and action, Los Banos will participate with neighboring and regional jurisdictions in coordinating air quality management programs.

Program HZ 7.2-A (AQ)

Once emissions thresholds are established by the SJVUAPCD, the City will consult with SJVUAPCD in the "early consultation process" as recommended by CEQA to determine a reasonable scope of air quality analysis for affected projects.

Program HZ 7.2-B (AQ)

Once the PM 10 emissions reduction program has been determined by the SJVUAPCD, the City of Los Banos will participate with other neighboring jurisdictions to implement those rules.

Policy HZ 7.3 (AQ)

Los Banos will seek methods to integrate land use, circulation, and air quality planning with neighboring and regional jurisdictions.

Legend

- City Limits
- Urban Limits (S.O.I.)
- Area of Interest
- 65 Ldn
- 60 Ldn

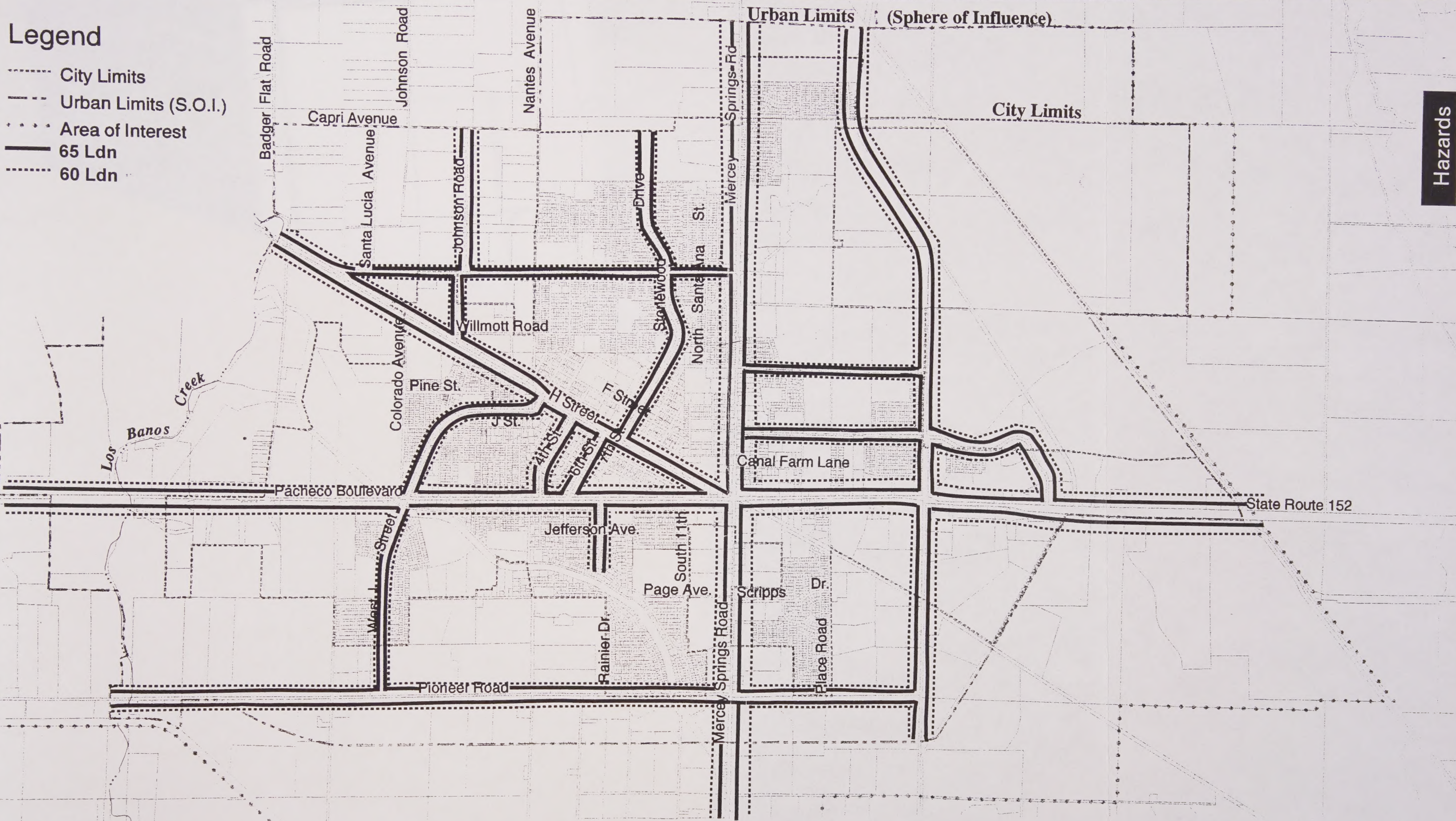
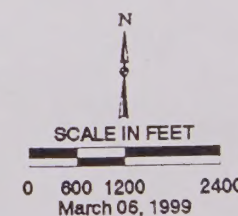


Figure HZ-5: Noise Contour Map



Oversized Map or Foldout not scanned.

Item may be viewed at the
Institute of Governmental Studies Library, UC Berkeley.

